ORDINANCE NO. 20100225-078

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE AUSTIN TOMORROW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY ADOPTING THE EAST RIVERSIDE CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

PART 1. FINDINGS.

(A) In 1979, the City Council adopted the "Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan."

(B) Article X, Section 5 of the City Charter authorizes the City Council to adopt by ordinance elements of a comprehensive plan that are necessary or desirable to establish and implement policies for growth, development, and beautification, including neighborhood, community, or area-wide plans.

(C) Members of the consulting firm A. Nelessen Associates, Inc. and City of Austin Planning and Development Review staff have met with neighborhood stakeholders, property owners, renters, business owners, developers, residents from surrounding neighborhoods, and City personnel since June of 2008 to develop the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan (the "Plan"). Public involvement was achieved through stakeholder interviews and meetings, a Community Visioning Workshop including a "Visual Preferences Survey" and charrette held September 13, 2008, a public meeting on the early concepts, and a public meeting held June 25, 2009, to present the draft Plan concepts, answer questions, and receive comments on the Plan.

(D) The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan provides a vision for the area and recommends action by the City and other stakeholders to improve the East Riverside Corridor. The Plan has nine major goals:

1. Make East Riverside Drive an attractive, people-friendly roadway with local destinations;
2. Enable safe pedestrian flow across East Riverside Drive;
3. Introduce efficient and frequent rail and bus transit service within and beyond the East Riverside Area;
4. Create unique and memorable places in the East Riverside Area;
5. Enable transit-supportive redevelopment that supports higher levels of development around primary transit stops;

6. Improve the appearance of the East Riverside Area and reduce criminal activity;
7. Safely and comfortably accommodate pedestrian, bike, transit and automobile traffic;
8. Provide parks and open space serving local and regional needs and balance the built environment with open space and plazas; and
9. Maintain a mix of housing options in the area for a range of incomes, including options for low- and mid-income populations.

(E) The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan goals are further described throughout the Plan.

(F) On February 9, 2010, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, and recommended adoption of the Plan by City Council.

(G) The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan is appropriate for adoption as an amendment to the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. The Plan furthers the City Council's goal of achieving appropriate, compatible development within the area. The Plan is necessary and desirable to establish and implement policies for growth, development, and beautification in the area.

PART 2. ADOPTION AND DIRECTION.

(A) Chapter 5 of the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan is amended to add the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan as set forth in the attached Exhibit A and hereby incorporated as part of this ordinance. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan is added as Section 5-26 of the Comprehensive Plan,

(B) The City Manager shall prepare zoning cases consistent with the land use and urban design recommendations in the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan.

(C) The City Manager shall provide periodic updates to the City Council on the status of the implementation of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan.

(D) The specific provisions of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan shall take precedence over any conflicting general provisions in the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan.

PART 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This ordinance takes effect on March 8, 2010.

PASSED AND APPROVED

February 25, 2010 §

§

§

Lee Leffingwell
Mayor

APPROVED:

David Allan Smith
City Attorney

ATTEST:

Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk

East Riverside Corridor
MASTER PLAN

Prepared by
The City of Austin &
A. Nelessen Associates, Inc.

East Riverside Corridor
MASTER PLAN
City of Austin

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank:

- All participants in the planning process who live, work, play and own or rent property in and around the East Riverside Corridor
- Other interested individuals who came to learn about the area and give feedback on this planning initiative
- The members of the technical advisory group who dedicated time to learning about East Riverside Corridor issues, attended public meetings, and reviewed and gave feedback on the Master Plan throughout the planning process.
- Other City staff members who made themselves available to answer technical questions and provide information on specific topics related to the Master Plan.
- Thanks to Baty Elementary School, Travis High School and Austin Community College - Riverside Campus for providing meeting space.

Austin City Council 2009-2010
Mayor Lee Leffingwell
Mayor Pro Tem Mike Martinez
Council Member Sheryl Cole
Council Member Laura Morrison
Council Member Chris Riley
Council Member Randi Shade
Council Member Bill Spelman

Austin City Council 2008-2009
Mayor Will Wynn
Mayor Pro Tem Brewster McCracken
Council Member Sheryl Cole
Council Member Lee Leffingwell
Council Member Mike Martinez
Council Member Laura Morrison
Council Member Randi Shade

City of Austin Staff
Marc Ott, City Manager
Sue Edwards, Assistant City Manager
Greg Guernsey, Director of Planning and Development Review Department (PDR)
George Adams, Assistant Director, PDR
Erica Leak, Senior Planner, PDR
Molly Scarbrough, Senior Planner, PDR
Tonya Swartzendruber, Senior Planner, PDR
Margaret Shaw, Director of Neighborhood Housing and Community Devt. (NHCD)
Rebecca Giello, NHCD
Kelly Nichols, NHCD

A. Nelessen Associates, Inc.
Anton C. Nelessen, Principal
April Geruso, Project Manager
Daniel Sheen
Kelley Sander
Liz Naskret
Andrew Svekla
Ross Sheasley
Cory Yemen

Estilo Communications, Inc.
Marion Sanchez, Agency Principal
Philip Jones, Public Relations Specialist
Roberto Pena, Public Relations Specialist

Bucher, Willis, & Ratliff Corporation
Scott C. Wetzel, PE
Adam K. Fisher, PE
Melissa M. McCollum, AICP
Scott Michie, AICP
Hailey Broussard

MWM Design Group
David Cazares, ASLA
Larry Halford, Principal

Rz & Associates
Sal Valdez

Dynamic Reprographics

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF EXHIBITS

The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan
VISION STATEMENT

East Riverside Drive has been transformed; gone is the wide space dominated by automobiles that allowed cars to travel along at highway speeds. Even though East Riverside Drive remains an important route from a regional perspective, drivers are aware that the space is shared with pedestrians and bicyclists and that it is a place that people are enjoying and not just passing through. Landscaping, landmarks and gateway features have been added at the intersections along East Riverside Drive, contributing greatly to the aesthetic appeal as one enters, exits, and traverses the Area. A diverse group of new and long-time residents are able to enjoy the safer, more attractive and vibrant streets and public spaces in the area.

The East Riverside Drive Area is comprised of active urban centers along a rail transit line that connects area residents, employees, and visitors with the airport, Lady Bird Lake, downtown, the University of Texas, and the Mueller Redevelopment, in addition to providing local service to amenities along East Riverside Drive itself. Long-time and new residents mix in public spaces created to meet the needs of a diverse population. Significant automobile traffic still travels through the Area, but it does not overshadow the built environment and drivers know when they enter the Area that they are traveling through a distinct and special place. In addition to rail, local and express bus service provides frequent and efficient travel options, making it easy to get around without use of a car. A designated bicycle lane on East Riverside Drive enables cyclists to travel safely through the area and to destinations along the way.

People walk all along East Riverside Drive, with street trees and landscaping providing beauty and shelter and acting as a natural buffer between the pedestrian and car environments. People are working, shopping, and entertaining themselves in new buildings on either side of East Riverside Drive that frame the street with large shop windows engaging passers-by. Taller buildings are concentrated around the main transit stops along the road and contain a mix of uses. Buildings further removed from transit stops and located off of East Riverside Drive offer a range of housing options for a diversity of ages and incomes and provide small-scale neighborhood services so that people can walk and bike to things in their immediate neighborhood. Opportunities for home ownership abound creating stable neighborhoods both along and just off of East Riverside Drive. Higher density development provides additional housing options and opportunities to create affordable housing through development bonuses so that the area continues to be socially and economically diverse. Neighborhoods are well-lit and maintained, with regular activity at the street level providing a natural safety mechanism.

The large surface parking lots along East Riverside Drive are long gone. Off-street parking no longer dominates the street scene and is located in parking structures, behind buildings, or screened from view. Tall and unattractive signage has been replaced with signs attached to a particular building space that is in-line with pedestrian views. A pedestrian-scale is created as taller buildings stair-step away from the roadway above the 3rd story and the buildings and streetscape combine to form an interesting and inviting public space.

The East Riverside Drive / Pleasant Valley Road intersection is no longer a barren space that serves only to move cars through the Area and collect stormwater, but is instead a major center of transit, pedestrian, and business activity. The new Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza is an area with shade trees lining the transit stop with space for accessing transit and area businesses, and open space. This is the primary focal point of activity on East Riverside Drive, on weekdays full of lunchtime employees and on weekends occupied with area residents and visitors shopping, milling around, and socializing. A market in the plaza provides opportunities for small businesses to have visibility in this area with large numbers of pedestrians.

Street connectivity throughout the Area has been improved, providing more options for traveling by foot, bicycle, or car. Large blocks are broken-up, allowing residents to efficiently walk, bike, or drive to the rail and bus stops, coffee shops, restaurants, grocery stores, civic facilities, and Lady Bird Lake without having to travel on major arterials. The secondary street network accommodates local trips within the Area but also enables more options for traveling outside the Area.

Pocket and linear parks, street trees, and other green elements are interspersed among the new development to soften the edges, to integrate the natural with the built environment, and to provide places for residents, employees, and visitors to recreate or simply enjoy the space. Public plazas are dispersed throughout development along East Riverside Drive, providing space for small gatherings, taking in the sun, and eating lunch. A recreational trail system along Country Club Creek provides links to the Roy Guerrero Colorado River Park and the Lady Bird Lake trail system, maintaining balance between the natural and built environments. Xeriscaping is used in open spaces throughout the Area and amenities for kids are provided in offering neighborhood recreation space to families with children to supplement the amenities of Lady Bird Lake on the north side of the East Riverside area.

New buildings embody the principles of green building and utilize solar panels and mini wind turbines to produce energy rather than relying entirely on the City electric grid system. Green infrastructure strategies such as bioswales, rainwater harvesting, pervious paving, green roofs, and landscape beds are utilized to capture and treat water run-off instead of discharging immediately into the stormdrain system.

The East Riverside Drive transformation has resulted in a cleaner, greener, safer, and welcoming environment for long-time and new residents, as well as visitors, to work, play, and have their daily service needs met. Environmentally sound building practices, the development of walkable, mixed use neighborhoods, and the integration of a more robust transit system with area redevelopment have all contributed to a more sustainable situation, making the East Riverside Area an example of central city redevelopment that other parts of Austin and other cities desire to emulate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EAST RIVERSIDE CORRIDOR

East Riverside Drive is important as a commercial center to an economically and socially diverse group of residents living in proximity to the roadway, in addition to serving as a gateway to downtown. It is an important commercial and residential corridor located a few minutes from downtown and along a portion of Lady Bird Lake. The Corridor is one of the few direct connections from Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) to Downtown Austin and has tremendous potential for redevelopment and renewal, some of which is already beginning to occur. The Corridor currently contains a high percentage of market-rate affordable housing, which unfortunately is affordable in part due to aging multi-family housing stock and a history of economic disinvestment and crime in the area. Private investment and redevelopment is beginning to occur on the edge of the Corridor close to downtown. The challenge for planning in the East Riverside Corridor area is to offer a framework by which public investment and private redevelopment can occur to reinvigorate the area, making it attractive for further investment as a local employment center and transit-supportive neighborhood, while managing to address the needs of all citizens living in the area, now and in the future.

The purpose of the East Riverside Corridor (ERC) Master Plan is to guide this redevelopment so that it is in line with the community's vision for the area. The Corridor Plan was initially called for in the East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan, and was later spurred-on by active city-wide discussions of introducing streetcar/light rail service to Austin's core neighborhoods and centers of activity, including along East Riverside Drive. This document, the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, represents one of the crucial first steps in ensuring that the area is transformed into the vision established through the public planning process.

Existing Neighborhood Plans

The East Riverside Corridor Planning Study Area incorporates two Neighborhood Planning Areas. The East Riverside/Oltorf Neighborhood Planning Area extends from Interstate Highway 35 (IH-35) to Grove Blvd. and east of this point, is the Montopolis Neighborhood Planning Area, from Grove Blvd. to State Highway 71 (SH 71) / Ben White Boulevard. The Neighborhood Plans for these areas provided valuable information from stakeholders in these areas regarding the present state of E. Riverside Drive, its functionality from a land use, transportation, and urban design standpoint, and the desired future of the roadway and areas surrounding it.

The Planning Process and Plan Goals

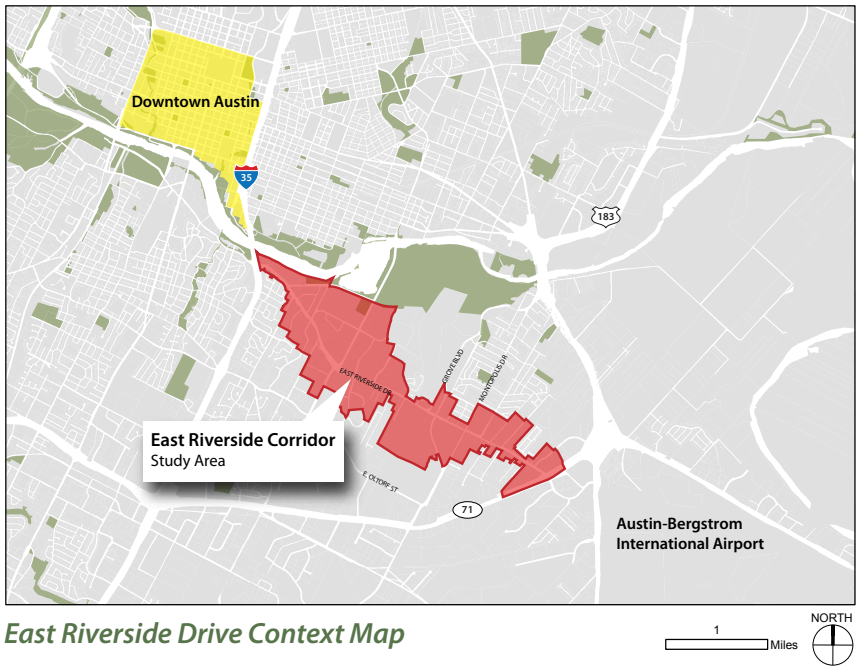
The goals of the Master Plan, as well as the strategies recommended to achieve them, resulted from the efforts of the people who live, work, and visit the East Riverside Corridor, the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department (formerly known as the Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department), Neighborhood Housing and Community Development, a Technical Advisory Group, and consultants hired to lead the planning process. This Plan is the direct result of months of community involvement and planning and describes a long-term vision for the East Riverside Corridor. The planning process that was conducted gathered feedback from many different individuals and groups with an interest in the East Riverside Area. This area is important for local businesses and residents but also serves a broader purpose as a route to and from the airport and downtown Austin.

While there were many significant points identified and issues outlined during the planning process, most fall within the following key topic areas:

- Making East Riverside Drive an attractive, people-friendly roadway with local destinations;
- Enabling safe pedestrian flow across East Riverside Drive;
- Introducing efficient and frequent rail and bus transit service within and beyond the East Riverside Area;
- Creating unique and memorable places in the Area;
- Enabling transit-supportive redevelopment that supports higher levels of development around primary transit stops;
- Improving the appearance of the Area and reducing criminal activity;
- Safely and comfortably accommodating pedestrian, bike, transit and automobile traffic; and
- Providing parks and open space serving local and regional needs and to balance the built environment with open space and plazas.
- Maintaining a mix of housing options in the area for a range of incomes, including options for low- and mid-income populations.

The Master Plan

As a result of the visioning process, a plan has been developed which encourages the transformation of the East Riverside Drive Corridor area, emphasizing the importance of transit-oriented and walkable development and sustainable practices throughout the Corridor, while also maintaining housing options for people with a range of incomes. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan is intended to be both a record of the public planning process and a guide for the future change and development within the Corridor area. It contains a compilation of maps, diagrams, images and text describing recommendations on a broad range of topics including urban design character, proposed land use districts, and transportation concepts, and affordable housing tools for the Planning Area and emphasizes the need for such things as well designed buildings and streetscapes, parks and open space, slower traffic, and safer bicycle routes.

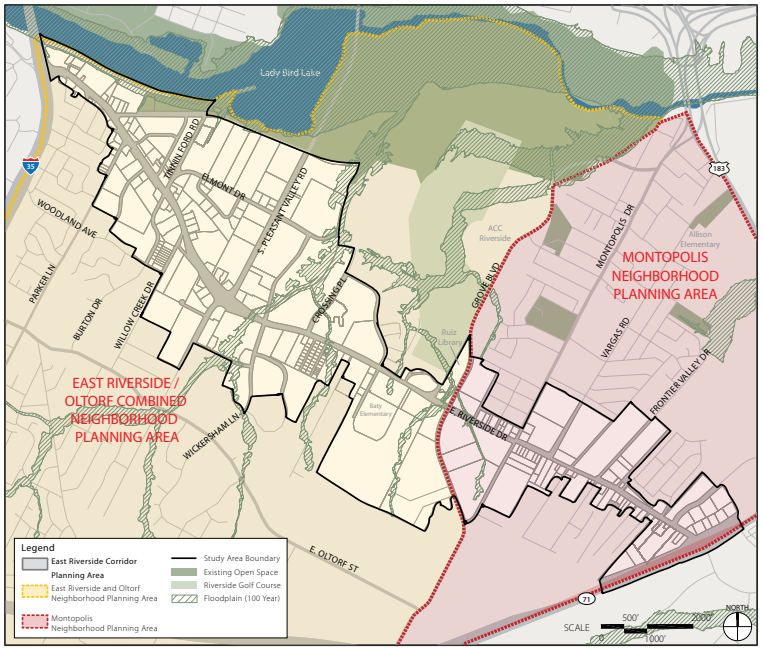


East Riverside Drive Context Map

The Master Plan also includes a proposed rail line that is recommended to be located in the center median of East Riverside Drive throughout the length of the Planning Area, connecting the airport to downtown Austin and beyond. Introduction of a fixed rail transit line is the most significant opportunity to reinvigorate and provide community benefits within the Corridor Area. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan will serve as the foundation for future zoning and design standards to be written specifically for the East Riverside Corridor and will guide future decisions regarding public infrastructure investments and private sector development and redevelopment.

Study Area Information

- Includes property along East Riverside Drive and some property near the roadway that has potential to redevelop
- Area extends from IH-35 to Ben White Blvd./SH 71
- Study Area is approximately 1,000 acres
- Includes two Neighborhood Planning Areas: East Riverside/Oltorf Combined and Montopolis
- Predominant existing land uses include: commercial, multifamily apartments, multifamily condominiums, undeveloped land
- Public facilities in and around the Study Area include: Baty Elementary School, Fire Station #22, East Riverside Campus of the Austin Community College, Roy Guerrero Colorado River Park, Lady Bird Lake and trail, and the Riverside Golf Course.



Study Area Map

Key Concepts and Recommendations in the Master Plan

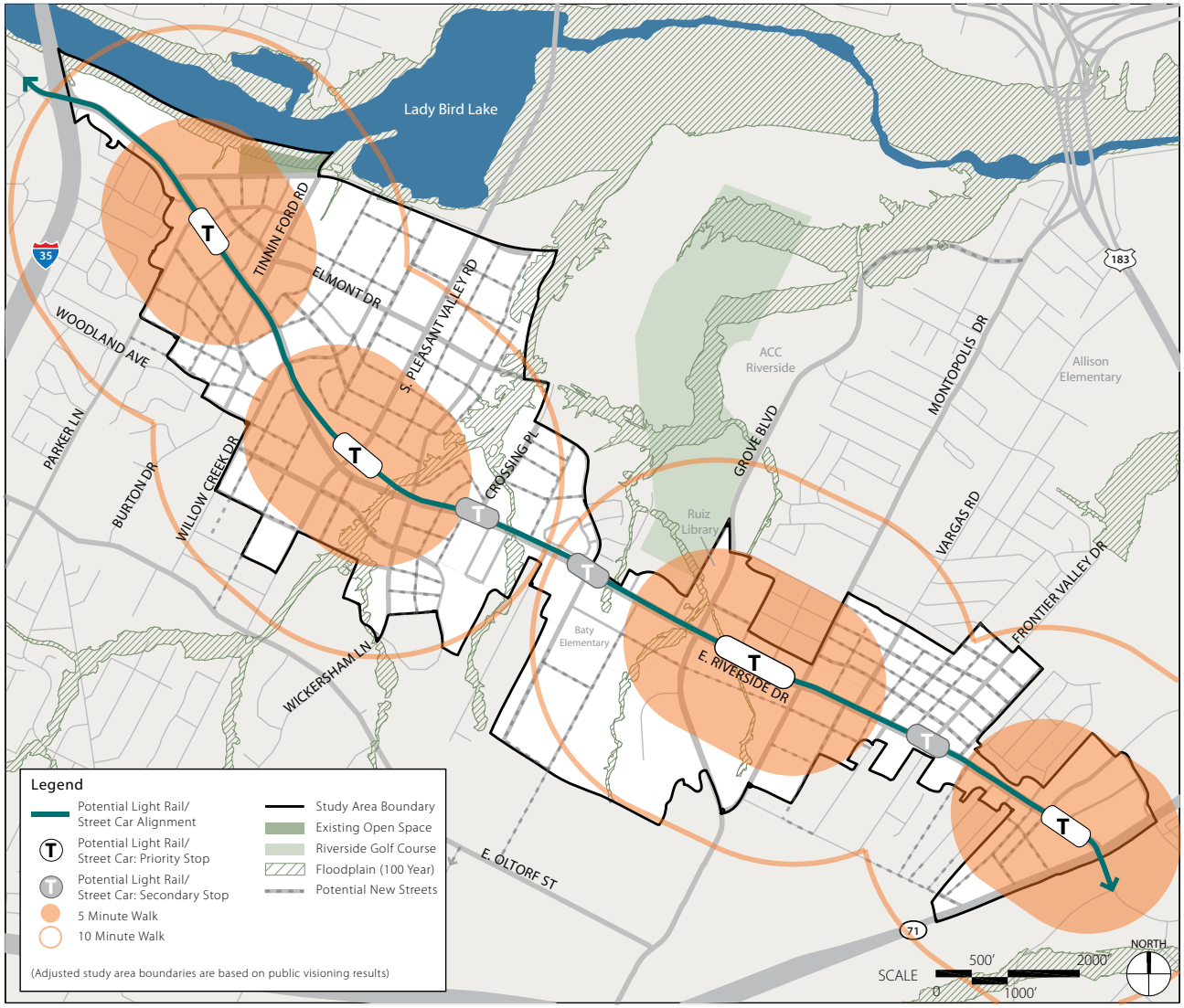
Transit

Rail proposal

- Streetcar/light rail line running down East Riverside Drive
- Four primary stops identified; secondary stops conceptually represent the desire for frequent stops along East Riverside Drive; location of all stops to be determined during rail planning.
- Identifiable places, or Hubs, should be created along East Riverside Drive around the primary transit stops. The Hubs would provide distinct destinations where housing, shops and offices would be located within a 5-minute walk of the stop.

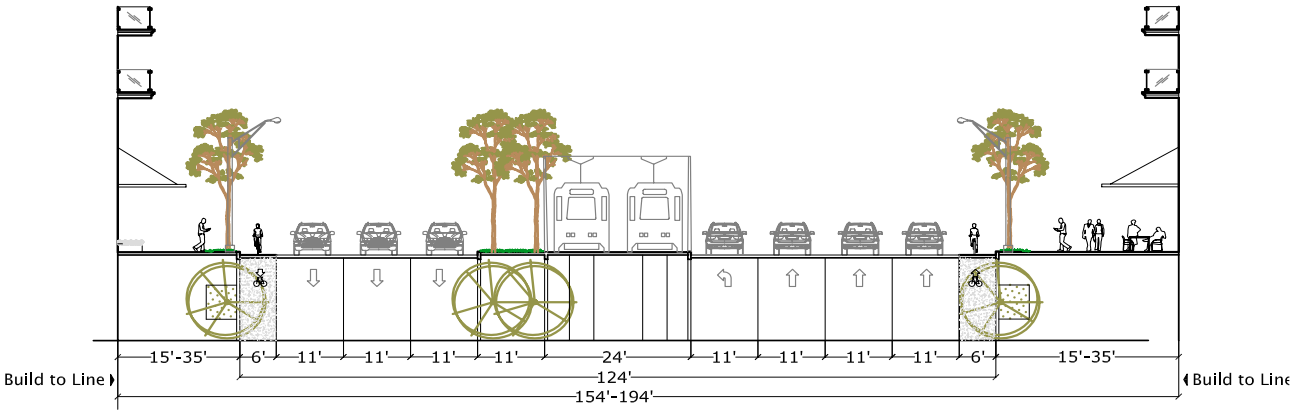
Bus Service

- Existing and additional bus service should be coordinated with rail service to create a unified transit network
- If rail transit is not implemented along the corridor, there is potential for Bus Rapid Transit to be put in place, instead. Bus Rapid Transit is a form of bus service with fewer stops and predictable, on time schedules that was recommended for East Riverside Drive as part of Capital Metro's "All Systems Go" Long Range Transit Plan before rail transit was recommended for the corridor.



Rail Transit Route Map

East Riverside Drive Typical Section



(This cross-section is conceptual and could be refined as part of rail planning and design.
Necessary Right-of-Way based on final design will be determined.)

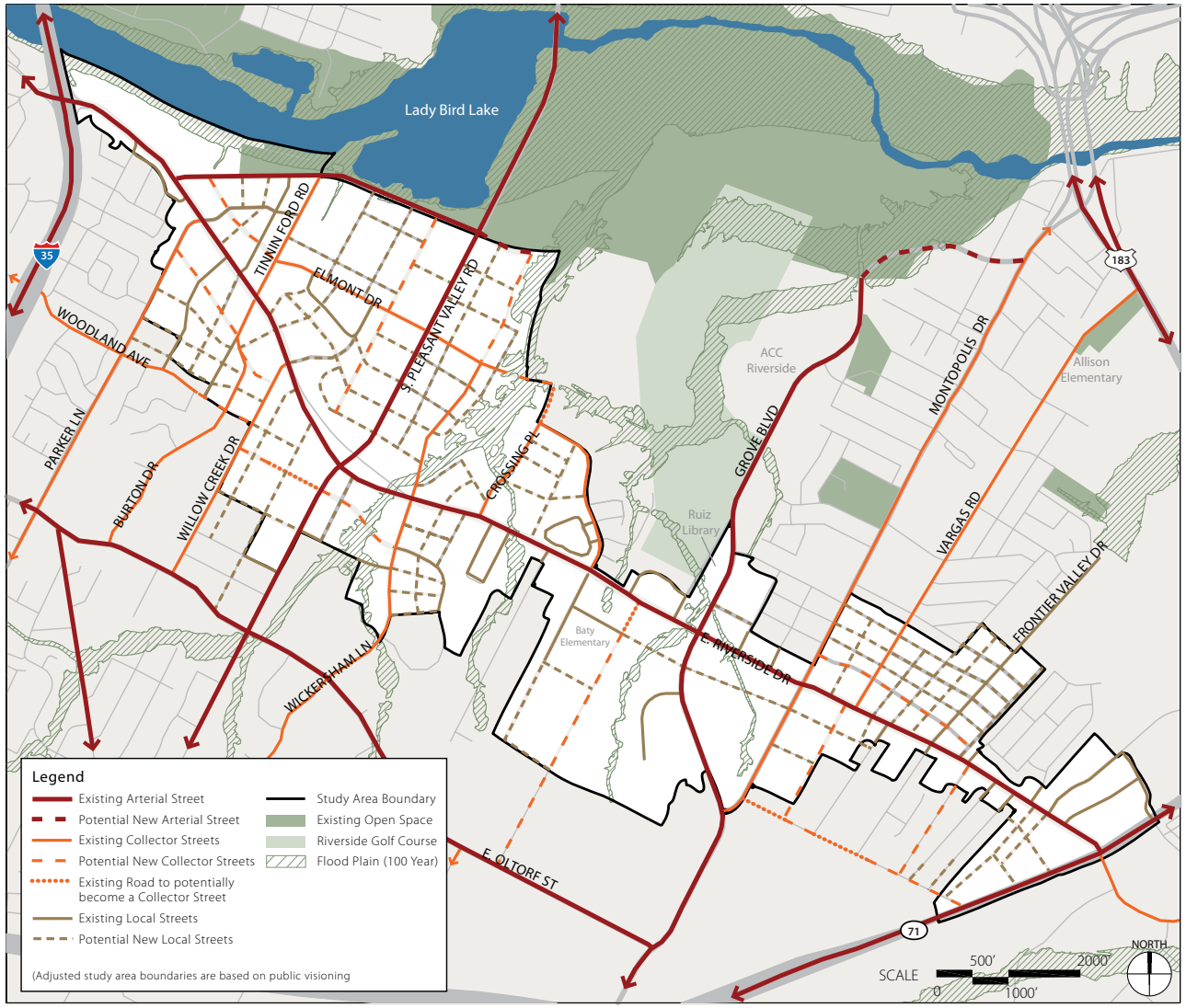
East Riverside Drive Typical Street Section

East Riverside Drive

- East Riverside Drive should be re-designed to be a multi-modal corridor that allows for safe and efficient movement of all transportation and modes, including transit vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- No reduction in the number of automobile lanes proposed but outside lane could convert to on-street parking during off-peak hours to support local business and new residential activity and provide a buffer between pedestrian/bicyclist activity and automobile traffic.
- A designated bicycle lane along East Riverside Drive with special pavement treatment to highlight the cycling environment.
- Safety improvements to allow for pedestrian flow across E. Riverside Drive such as: special paving in crosswalks; additional traffic signals, lighting, and crosswalks; improved signage; pedestrian refuge islands; pedestrian underpass at Country Club Creek.
- Wide sidewalks with large landscaped street tree/ furniture zone to provide a buffer between pedestrian and automobile traffic.
- Buildings brought-up to the street with display windows to activate the streetscape, or pedestrian environment, by creating an interesting and engaging walking experience.

Street Network Improvements

- As redevelopments occurs, create an interconnected network of streets and walkable blocks. The street network should provide a clear hierarchy of streets: arterials, collector streets, local streets
- Create new and smaller blocks that make the area much more efficient to navigate for pedestrians and cyclists
- Provide additional street options, allowing residents to efficiently walk, bike, or drive to the rail and bus stops, coffee shops, restaurants, grocery stores, civic facilities, and Lady Bird Lake without having to travel on major arterials and through already overcrowded intersections.



Street Network Map

Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza

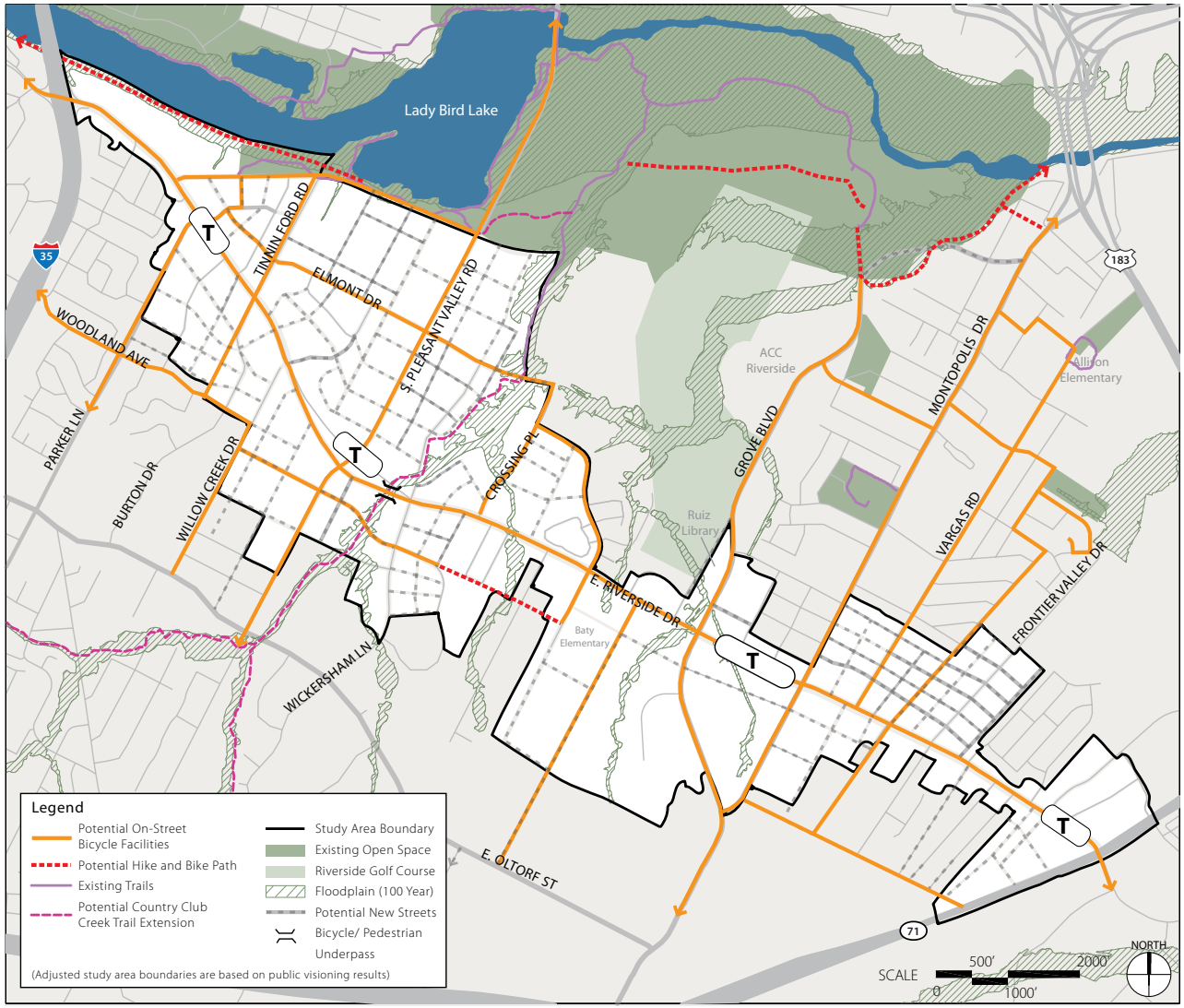
- Evaluate the opportunity to realign East Riverside Drive to create a prominent transit plaza and new developable parcels in the large existing median at the Pleasant Valley intersection
- Focal point of Corridor with opportunities for socializing, shopping, people-watching, and accessing multiple transit modes
- Hardscaped plaza in front of transit stop featuring trees, open space, and street furniture
- A market in the plaza could provide an opportunity for small retailers to benefit from high levels of pedestrian traffic
- Development frames the transit plaza
- Potential development in the area between the rail and relocated westbound lanes of Riverside Drive is framed by trees to maintain the feeling of open space as autos approach
- Local automobile access provided to transit plaza
- Frequent and convenient bus/rail transfers

Bicycle Circulation

- Include a mix of striped bicycle lanes and off-street bicycle paths to serve multiple needs and levels of bicycling experience
- Bike lanes and paths should complement and link to existing and proposed trails and parks
- Provide adequate bicycle parking and shower facilities
- Supports completion of the Country Club Creek trail and closing the gap in the Trail at Lady Bird Lake to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to the waterfront and local and regional destinations.

The Pedestrian Environment

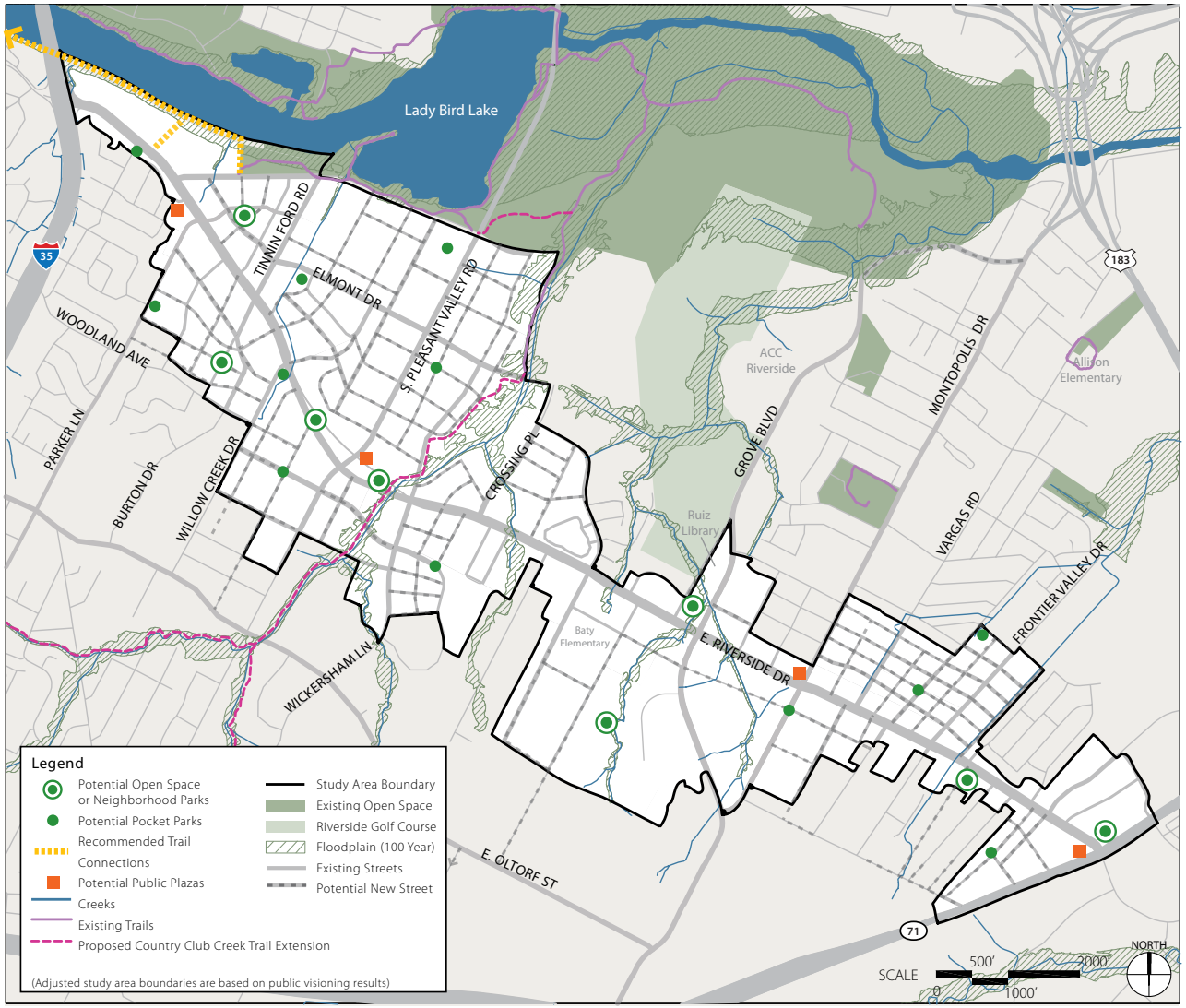
- Improve the streetscape to make walking safe, comfortable and interesting
- Initially focus streetscape improvements in Hubs and commercial areas on Riverside Drive.
- Provide continuous and ample sidewalks on all streets with the level of amenity based on size of roadway and amount of auto traffic
- Enhance key transit stops
- Provide protection from cars
- Minimize driveway curb cuts
- Provide ample safe pedestrian crossings of roadways



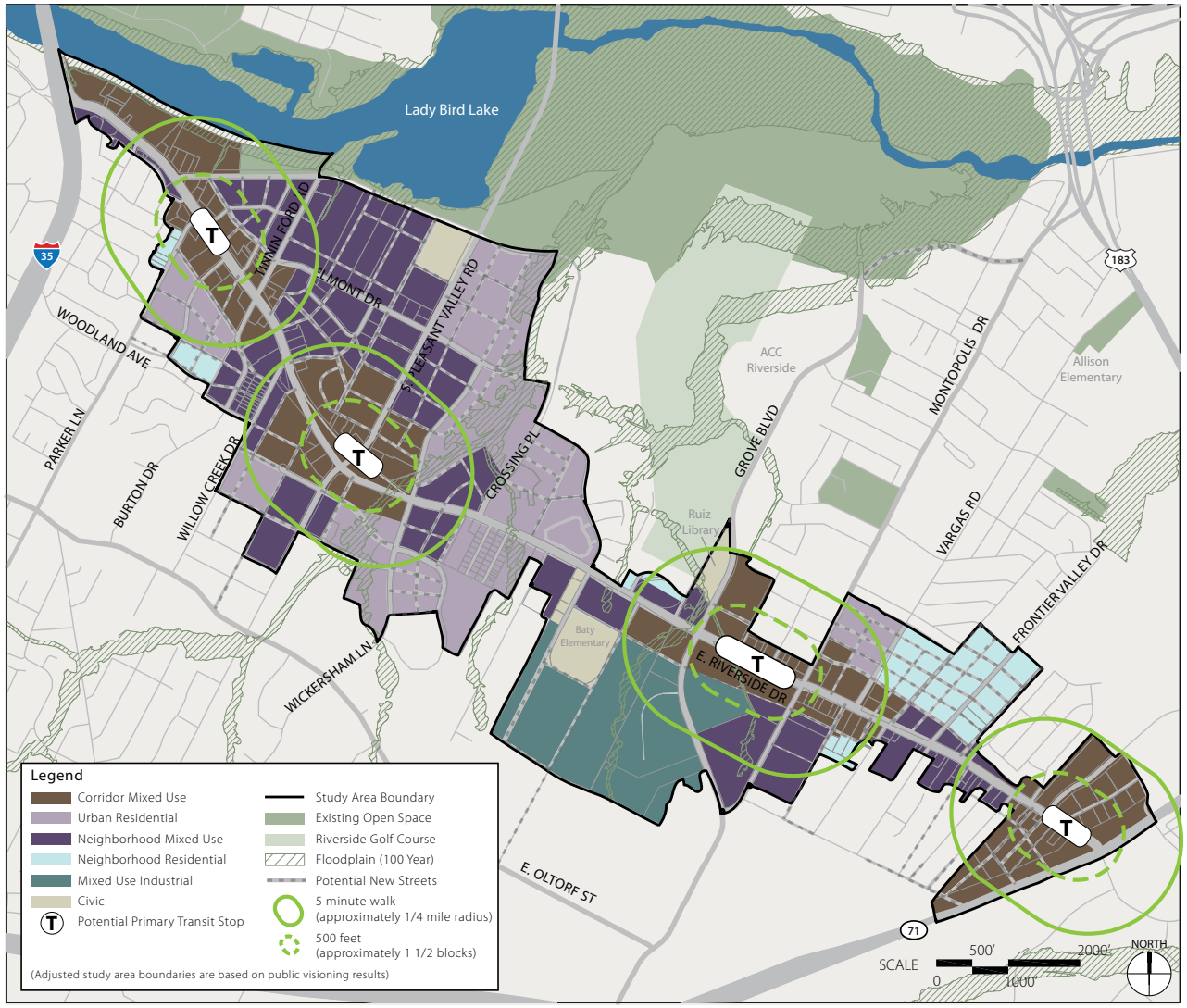
Bicycle Circulation Map

Open Space

- Incorporate a range of types and sizes of open space within the area
- Provide improved connections between Lady Bird Lake and Roy G. Guererro Park to the East Riverside Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods so that all residents, employees, and visitors to the East Riverside Corridor can have access to and enjoy Austin's treasured waterfront
- Increase open space in the area south of East Riverside Drive
- Prioritize preservation of existing natural areas and trees
- Establish a network of shaded streetscapes, bikeways and boulevards to connect open space, major activity centers and transit stops
- As redevelopment and public improvements occur, require well designed on-site open space. Establish standards to ensure that this open space is of high-quality and part of an overall system rather than remnant areas of private development or public infrastructure projects
- Integrate open space with green infrastructure/ sustainable stormwater facilities



Open Space Map



Land Use District Map

Note: This Corridor Plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.

Land Use

- Activity "Hubs" are identified within ¼ mile (5 minute walk) around primary rail stops and indicate areas with greatest potential for retail, mixed use, and general redevelopment activity. Each hub will have a distinct character shaped by its context. The four Hubs include:
- *Lakeshore Center*: Proximity to Downtown, Lady Bird Lake and natural areas; melding nature with urban center
- *Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza*: Center of commercial, residential and transit activity; pedestrian-focused streets; major destination; commercial and residential node ; local market location
- *Montopolis Gateway*: Local commercial center; reminiscent of Hispanic influence in surrounding neighborhoods; gateway from surrounding neighborhoods
- *East Riverside Gateway*: Gateway and landmark features to highlight area especially for visitors coming from airport; mixed use with commercial/ office focus; regional transportation center with potential parking structure

<u>Proposed Land Use Districts</u>

Land use districts identify a range of appropriate development possibilities on properties in the Planning Area as well as general scale of development. Key considerations for the placement of land use districts are proximity to a proposed rail stop, relative location to East Riverside Drive, and proximity to existing single family neighborhoods outside the Planning Area:

Corridor Mixed Use – centered around primary transit stops along East Riverside Drive and generally coincides with the central core of the Hubs; highest density district designation within the Corridor and ideally will contain buildings with multiple uses; mixed use development is key in this district; potential for height and density bonuses within the hubs.

Neighborhood Mixed Use – generally occupies the areas at edge and outside of a Corridor Mixed Use District; convenient access to neighborhood services and adjacent to the commercial mixed use Hubs surrounding the transit stops; opportunity for residential and smaller-scale commercial uses; more dense than the predominantly residential districts described below; potential for height and density bonuses within the hubs.

Urban Residential - contains only residential development in the form of townhouses, condos and multifamily dwellings; more dense than a standard single-family neighborhood; convenient access to services provided in adjacent Land Use Districts; properties in close proximity to primary transit stations have potential for height and density bonuses within the hubs.

Neighborhood Residential – contains only residential development; generally for properties located off of East Riverside Drive; provides a transition from existing single family neighborhoods to the more active, urban development of the core of East Riverside Drive; residential units may be in the form of detached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, and smaller scale multi-family buildings. No height or density bonuses would be allowed in this district.

Industrial Mixed Use – specifically tailored to the properties owned by Tokyo Electron and Austin Energy; low impact industrial uses are still envisioned with added options for retail, office, and attached multi-family residential development; ; area in close proximity to transit stations would have potential for height and density bonuses within the hubs.

Civic Spaces – Existing civic facilities in the Study Area are identified by a civic designation on the Land Use Districts map. As the East Riverside area changes and more people make it a place to live, work, and visit, additional civic amenities and services will be necessary to serve the community. Civic facilities could potentially be located anywhere within the Study Area and are not limited to the locations identified as Civic on the map.

Other land use elements

- Commercial frontages are identified where ground floor non-residential development is desired; the key factors for placement of commercial frontages are proximity to a proposed rail stop and direct access to East Riverside Drive or other busy streets.
- Mixed use encouraged around primary rail stops
- In general, smaller scale residential is recommended on property adjacent to single family neighborhoods outside of Planning Area

Building Heights and Development Bonuses

- General Area proposed height limits without height bonuses range from three to five stories.
- To create an additional source of funding and an incentive to provide a higher level of community benefits in the area, it is recommended that a development bonus system be created that could allow additional building height or density in exchange for the provision of community benefits.
- The specific requirements for provision of community benefits that would need to be provided in order to receive additional entitlements will be established with public input following adoption of this Master Plan, during the creation of the Regulating Plan. It will not be a negotiated exchange, but rather a set ratio between the community benefits must be provided in exchange for a specified increase in building floor area or height.
- Development and height bonuses are only available for properties within both the planning area boundaries and a 5-minute walking distance of the primary rail stops (approximately ¼ mile radius from the rail stop).
- Buildings over three stories step back from the street to allow more air, light, space, and views.
- Tallest buildings are located in hubs around primary transit stops.
- Compatibility standards regulating the height of buildings in close proximity to single family residences will apply, creating a transition between single family properties and other types and sizes of buildings.
- In a development bonus program, developers seeking increases in height, FAR, or parking relief would

be required to provide community benefits in exchange for the increased entitlements.

- Priorities for public benefits include: provision of open space, streetscaping, construction of bicycle facilities, and green building. In public meetings, neighborhood representatives also identified the preservation of affordable housing in the area as important and expressed concern about gentrification, making affordable housing a potential community benefit for development bonuses.
- Precise parcels in the planning area that fall within development bonus areas and the community benefit trade-offs for additional height and/or density will be determined with public input during development of the Regulating Plan and Development Bonus system for the area, following adoption of the Corridor Master Plan.

Design Guidelines

- Provide wide sidewalks and an improved streetscape
- Build to the street; create a continuous building presence at the sidewalk edge along streets
- Provide shade and comfort for the pedestrian at the street level
- Establish building height stepbacks from the street to maintain a human scale at the level of the pedestrian

- Provide generous street level windows and doors
- Accentuate primary building entrances
- Encourage façade articulation to decrease perceived scale of large buildings
- Design buildings with active outdoor space through the use of balconies, patios, courtyards or similar areas, and engage open space amenities such as Lady Bird Lake, public parks, and trails
- New buildings should respect the scale and character of neighborhood edges
- Screen mechanical and utility equipment
- Incorporate signage that enhances the pedestrian character of the corridor
- Establish lighting standards that provide safety and enable nighttime activity, using fixtures that prevent light from interrupting adjacent properties
- Create landmark buildings in prominent locations to create identifiable and memorable places along the Corridor

Sustainability

- Create an incentive program for Green Building and LEED
- Provide property owners with information to encourage green practices in private development
- Consider the potential for alternative energy sources in all projects
- Material recycling and reuse should be encouraged and accommodated in project designs

Parking

- Reduce off-street parking requirements to prevent "over parking"
- Require better off-street parking design; screening parking that is visible from the street and encouraging structured parking "wrapped" by a building
- Provide on-street short-term parking
- Continue to allow and encourage shared parking and community parking facilities

Infrastructure

- Upgrade water and wastewater infrastructure in coordination with the rail project and as redevelopment occurs
- Evaluate overall drainage system condition and capacity
- Encourage shared stormwater detention and water quality facilities
- Development should incorporate green infrastructure for stormwater management
- Design new streets with green stormwater infrastructure
- Preserve natural streambeds to better manage stormwater
- Place power lines underground

Water Conservation

- The City should make reclaimed water available for redevelopment in the East Riverside Corridor area
- Incorporate water conservation measures early in project design

Affordable Housing

The East Riverside Corridor has traditionally provided more affordable housing options than other parts of the City, but maintaining affordability in the area will be a challenge as Austin continues to grow and the demand for housing in Austin's urban core increases, increasing the cost of land.

Preservation and creation of affordable housing in the corridor will be vital to provide housing options for households that wish to remain in the corridor as well as to provide a variety of housing options for future residents. Housing should accommodate a variety of household sizes, including families with children. A development bonus could provide an incentive for new development to provide affordable housing or contribute funds to an affordable housing trust fund. The City should also continue to administer programs and incentives to assist in the retention and development of affordable housing, as well as explore opportunities for preservation of existing low-income rental housing in the corridor. It is important to create zoning regulations that allow the development of attached housing (duplex/condos/townhomes) to increase the supply of affordable homeownership options.

Tools for affordable housing include:

- Maintain and renew existing subsidized affordable housing.
- Preserve existing non-subsidized affordable housing.
- Increase supply of housing - especially attached affordable homeownership housing products - to address the limited product of this type available in the Corridor area in conjunction with high demand.
- Encourage private sector funding and/or construction of affordable housing through the provision of Development Bonuses.
- Expand public sector funding of affordable housing.
- Explore feasibility of a TOD catalyst project on the City-owned land at the East Riverside Drive/Pleasant Valley Blvd. intersection.
- Promote community-based housing development organizations.
- Support Asset Creation.
- Coordinate City services to mitigate effects of potential displacement.

Implementation

The Master Plan describes a variety of important steps the City, regional and state agencies, private development and the community should take to realize the vision for the East Riverside Corridor. The Master Plan recommends implementation items that fall within the following categories:

Planning and Administration

- Describes recommended steps to establish the regulatory framework for the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan and mechanisms to encourage on-going implementation efforts.
- Recommends designating the portion of East Riverside Dr. from Pleasant Valley Blvd. to Hwy. 71 as a Core transit Corridor per application of standards in LDC Subchapter: Design Standards and Mixed use and an interim step when the Corridor Master Plan is adopted.
- Recommends creating new zoning and development standards tailored for the corridor to implement the land use and urban design recommendations of the master Plan.
- The two neighborhood plans that overlap the East Riverside Corridor area should be amended to incorporate the East Riverside Master Plan when the new zoning and development standards are adopted.

Catalyst Projects/Initial Investments

- Identifies suggested initial investments and catalyst projects with the potential to spur additional private investment and redevelopment, including the following:
- Implement streetcar/light rail transit line and primary transit stops
- Improve pedestrian crossings of East Riverside Drive
- Installation of bicycle lanes along East Riverside Drive
- Continue to implement Country Club Creek trail plan with an underpass at Riverside Drive
- Targeted public and private improvements within the development hubs
- Pleasant Valley transit plaza & development
- Reduce crime in the East Riverside Corridor area

Anticipate Infrastructure Improvements and Community Needs

- Describes key public and private investments that will need to be made to support the Corridor Plan vision. In addition to the catalyst projects listed above, a number of infrastructure improvements and community facilities are recommended.

Financial Strategies and Tools

- Identifies several tools the City may employ to finance the implementation actions outlined in this document. It will take a variety of financing mechanisms and involvement from both the private and public sector to complete the various projects recommended in the Corridor Plan.

THE PLAN

EAST RIVERSIDE CORRIDOR

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW
ABOUT THE EAST RIVERSIDE CORRIDOR
PLANNING PROCESS AND OVERVIEW
OF THE MASTER PLAN
PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Overview

East Riverside Drive is important as a commercial center to an economically and socially diverse group of residents living in proximity to the roadway, in addition to serving as a gateway to downtown. The strip shopping malls along E. Riverside Drive epitomize the car-dominated environment that is, unfortunately, typical of much of the modern American landscape. The first impression many visitors have of the area is of an expanse of low rise buildings or under-utilized and/or vacant retail space, and the associated surface parking lots. The current appearance of the built features in the area is dominated by a cacophony of commercial signs, blistering parking lot asphalt, and a distinct lack of both quality architecture and landscaping. The Corridor currently contains a high percentage of market-rate affordable housing, which unfortunately is affordable in part due to aging multi-family housing stock and a history of economic disinvestment and crime in the area. Private investment and redevelopment is beginning to occur on the edge of the East Riverside area close to downtown and one of the city's most important amenities, Lady Bird Lake. The challenge for planning in the East Riverside Corridor area is to offer a framework by which public investment and private redevelopment can occur to reinvigorate the area, making it attractive for further investment as a local employment center and transit-supportive neighborhood, while managing to address the needs of all citizens living in the area, now and in the future.

About the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area

The boundaries of the East Riverside Corridor Study Area are located along roughly 3.5 miles of East Riverside Drive from IH-35 to State Highway 71/Ben White Boulevard. (See Exhibit 1.2) The Planning Area is roughly 1,000 acres and contains more than 850 parcels and approximately 1,200 buildings. The Study Area boundaries were originally suggested by City of Austin staff to comprise 1) all parcels touching East Riverside Drive between IH-35 and Ben White Boulevard, and 2) non-single family parcels located within 1,000 feet of East Riverside. These boundaries were intended from the project inception to be flexible and to reflect the results of the public visioning process.

The demographic makeup of residents in the East Riverside Corridor area has been changing over the last few years. The City of Austin demographer, Ryan Robinson, has noted changes in the area related to market pressure and the area's proximity to downtown. In the city as a whole, concentrations of minority populations in East Austin have decreased, while the overall Hispanic population has increased. Median property appraisal values have increased in the 78741 zip code by 82 to 149% percent between 2000 and 2009, largely due to the city's population growth and this area's proximity to the central city. Due to these pressures, redevelopment of aging properties has already begun to occur. As population growth and demand for housing in the central core continues, market forces will continue to spur development and redevelopment in the East Riverside Corridor area.

At approximately the same time redevelopment began to occur in the East Riverside Corridor area, City Council asked a consultant team to examine options for future rail connections in central Austin as part of the Downtown Austin Plan (DAP). Their preliminary recommendation included a rail route along East Riverside Drive from Downtown to the Austin Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA).

Due to the redevelopment that is beginning to occur, the discussions about a rail line along East Riverside

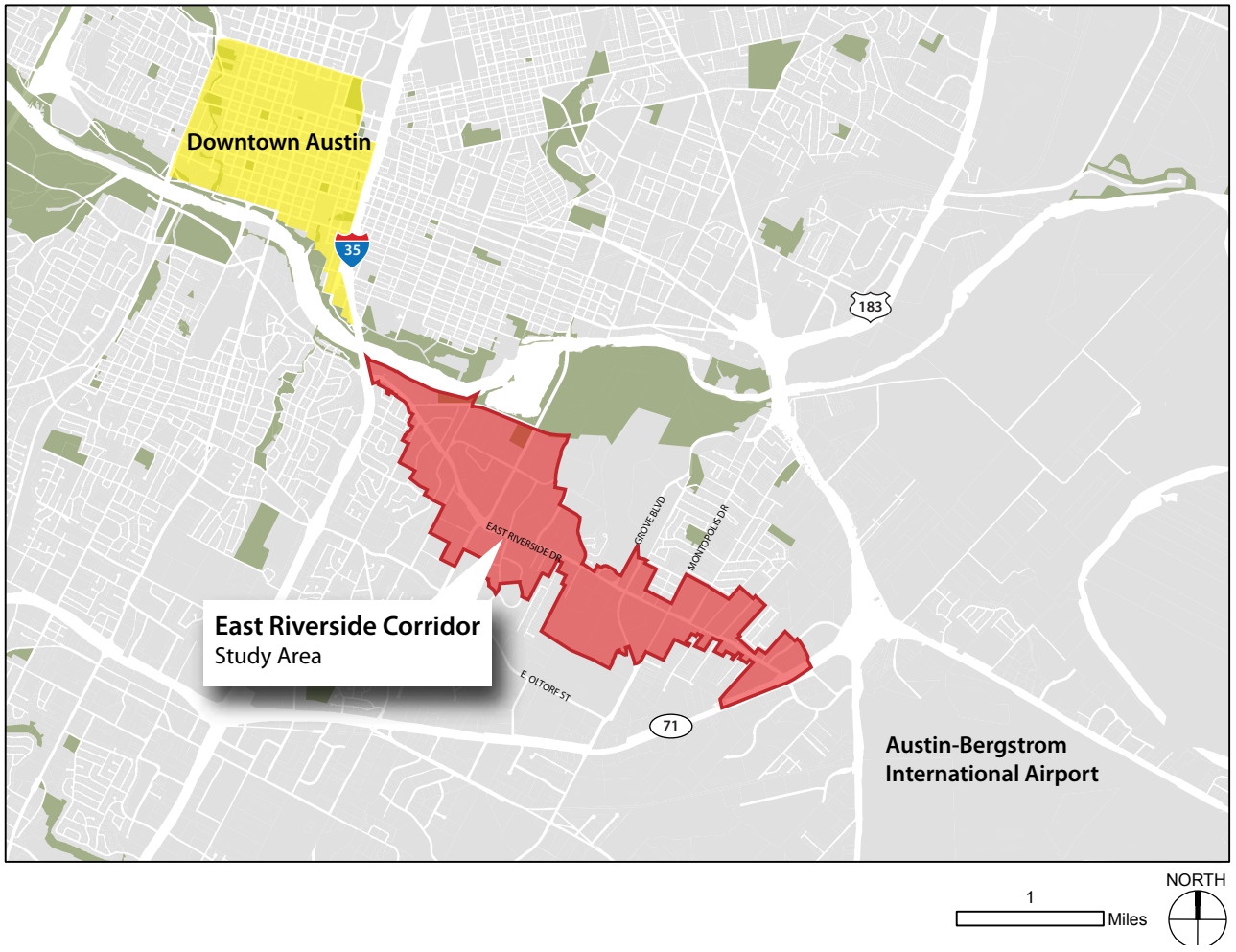
Drive, and in response to requests made during the East Riverside Oltorf Combined (EROC) neighborhood planning process for a corridor study, City Council decided to initiate a master planning process for the East Riverside Corridor. This will provide an opportunity to transform an underutilized commercial corridor into a more sustainable, mixed use, transit-oriented neighborhood. The master plan resulting from a focused and comprehensive planning effort will help to guide private redevelopment, public infrastructure investments, and recommend policy objectives to maintain an economically diverse community as redevelopment and investments for revitalization occurs.

Throughout the process, the Planning Area boundaries were modified based on public input. Adjusted boundaries are reflected in this introduction section of the Master Plan, as well as in other sections of the Plan, but the original boundaries are shown in the existing conditions maps in Appendix A.

While the visioning process focused specifically on the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area, a truly comprehensive approach to planning necessitated some consideration of conditions and future planning decisions beyond the Planning Area boundary into the Montopolis and East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan Areas, including street connections, bicycle connections and open space. Where appropriate, recommendations regarding areas outside the Planning Area are presented in this report.

Adoption of the Master Plan will signal to property owners, business owners, the development community, City staff, and other stakeholders that the City Council embraces the vision outlined in the plan to encourage redevelopment of the existing low density, auto-oriented commercial uses into a safe, attractive, revitalized corridor

Exhibit 1.1:
East Riverside Corridor Context Map



that is more pedestrian-friendly and supportive of rail transit that has been proposed as part of the Urban Rail Study. The goal is to leverage private redevelopment that is already starting to occur to improve the area and create economic and societal opportunities for current and near-by residents, while simultaneously welcoming new residents and businesses to the area. Once adopted, various City departments can move forward with integrating the Plans' recommendations into their departmental work plans.

Planning Process and Overview of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan

This Master Plan identifies a series of basic land use, design characteristics, and mobility objectives for the East Riverside Corridor, in conjunction with information about how the City of Austin strives to provide affordable housing options throughout the city to create diverse, mixed-income neighborhoods. The goals and objectives of the Master Plan, as well as the strategies recommended to achieve them, resulted from the efforts of the consultants led by A. Nelessen Associates, the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department (formerly named the Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department), the Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department, a Technical Advisory Group, and the people who live, work and visit the East Riverside Corridor. A meeting with community leaders and stakeholders, a developer's meeting, a preliminary visioning workshop, a Public visioning workshop, and a 'Did We Get It Right?' public meeting were the basis of the planning process, with additional input from a variety of different constituencies, including affordable housing advocates and current low-income residents in the area. A variety of tools and planning techniques were used throughout the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan planning process to evaluate current and potential visual, spatial and economic characteristics of the Study Area. Results from several of these techniques, such as the Visual Preference Survey™, Demographic, Market and Policy Questionnaire, and Vision Translation Workshop, are provided in Appendix B.

As a result of the visioning processes, a plan has been developed which emphasizes the importance of sustainable practices, transit-oriented and walkable development throughout the Corridor. These goals are consistent with the needs of current low-income residents in the area, who depend on transit service and rely upon local services to meet their health, education, and retail needs. A proposed transit line, stops and accompanying transit-oriented development along East Riverside Drive create concentrated areas of development, or 'hubs,' to define the Corridor area. By concentrating the bulk of denser development around the transit stops, a series of walkable "main street" areas are formed, generating gathering places for the surrounding community, and in some cases, the surrounding region. The purpose for this kind of development is to accommodate and encourage new development and redevelopment around transit stations in a way that promotes the use of public transit and other forms of alternative transportation, creation of public gathering spaces, while also preserving lower-density housing further from the transit stops. The existing multi-family properties in the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area were built at different times over the past few decades, so they will likely redevelop at different times, providing a mix of ages and types of housing, as well as a range of housing prices. For the aging low-density commercial spaces and undeveloped land that can accommodate many new residents without displacing current residents, this Master Plan recommends development bonuses as incentives to encourage their redevelopment around primary transit stations. The Master Plan serves to provide a framework for public improvements such as better sidewalk connections, bike facilities, pocket parks and stronger urban design standards for any future development or redevelopment that may occur. Through the visioning process it became clear that current residents and planning participants already rely heavily on alternative modes of transportation and this sort of development would continue to encourage and support the of use of multiple forms of transportation.

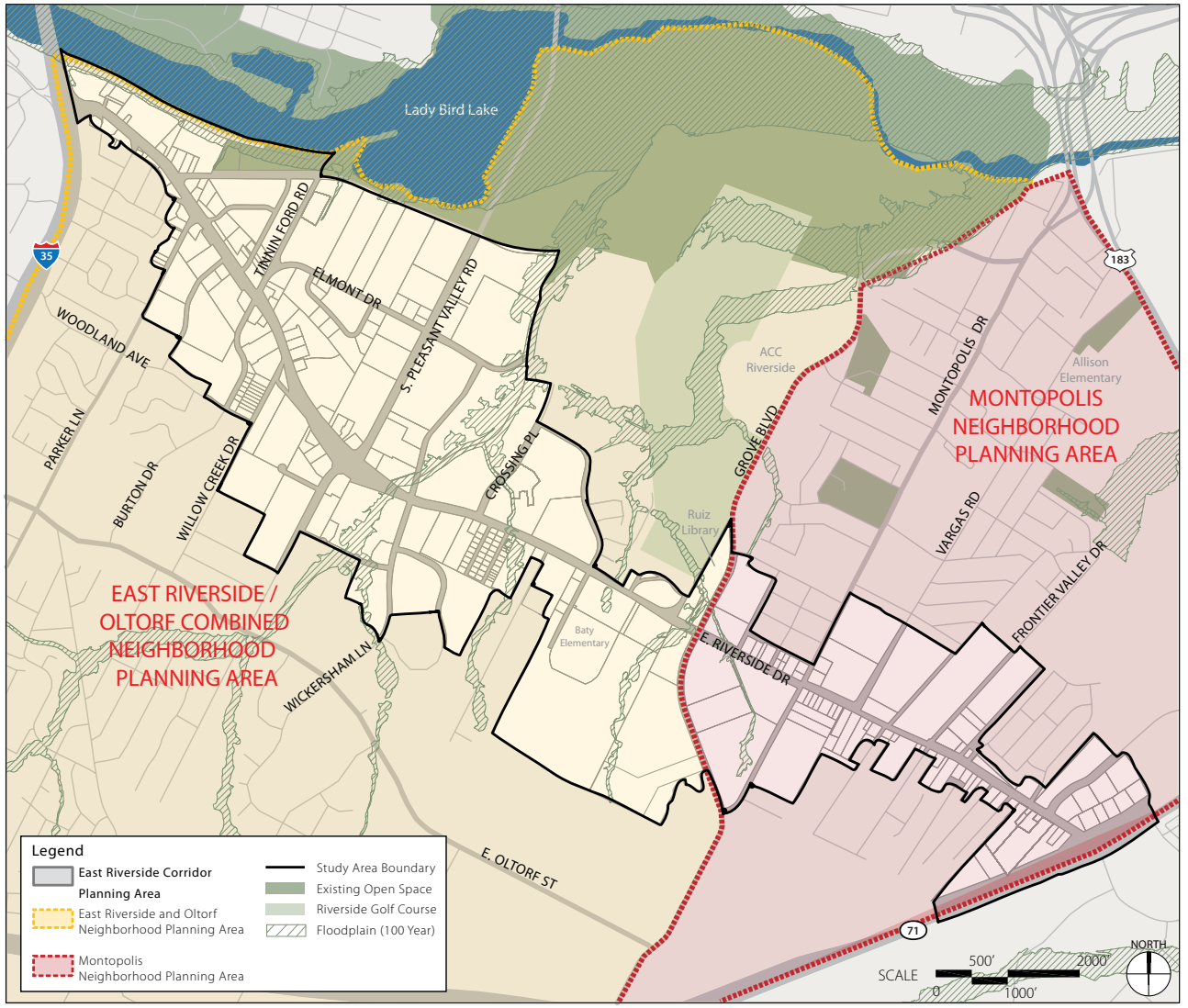
Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan is to articulate a vision in such a way that it can guide the form, shape, and character of the area for years to come, which calls for housing to accommodate a range of incomes. Major elements of the Master Plan were identified through a public visioning process designed to create a shared vision for the East Riverside Corridor. The Master Plan will be used as the basis for changes to zoning, land use regulations, site development standards, streetscape design standards, and building design standards that will be incorporated into a regulating plan for the area, the process for which will begin following the adoption of the Master Plan. The Master Plan will also guide City decisions regarding infrastructure improvements and policy-making as appropriate to achieve the vision.

This Master Plan is a policy document, not a development proposal. It addresses the related issues of land use, building design, transportation, open space, and the design of the public realm, or the space that is accessible to the public, including sidewalks, streets, parks, etc. It also describes the policies currently in place in the City of Austin to provide affordable housing both in the East Riverside Corridor area and in the city as a whole. It does not assume that the recommendations of this Plan will become reality at once, or that adequate funding, or the market for private-sector development investment is in place to implement them all. Rather, the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan will guide many actions taken over a number of years, changing the controls that regulate new development, and creating standards that affect the character and quality of the streets and public spaces. Much of the vision of this Master Plan will be implemented through private sector development, with the City setting standards to guide that development to achieve public goals, and with strategic public infrastructure investment to address gaps not provided by the private sector. The recommended first step of implementation is for the Austin City Council to adopt the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, including the proposed implementation strategy.

The sections of the plan that articulate the shared vision for the area are: Mobility, Open Space, Land Use and Density, Urban Design Guidelines, Infrastructure, Affordable Housing, and Implementation.

Exhibit 1.2:
Study Area Map



SECTION 2

MOBILITY

Introduction

Successful urban areas allow people to move conveniently among many destinations using a variety of modes of transportation. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan takes a holistic approach to mobility planning in the Corridor. This section of the Plan makes recommendations on a broad range of transportation related issues including the street network, transit, bicycle travel, intersection improvements, and the pedestrian environment. The creation of a multimodal mobility network is a critical objective of the Master Plan.

One of the greatest challenges for the East Riverside Corridor will be the transformation of the area from one that is auto-oriented to a multimodal, people-friendly environment. To make this possible, there will need to be multiple changes to the mobility system, including an improved street network, new transit options, and improved pedestrian and bicycling facilities.

Transit

High quality transit service is essential to realizing the vision for East Riverside, and for making the area more affordable for current and future residents by lowering the portion of a family's budget that has to be spent on transportation. Convenient, reliable transit plays an important role in the creation of a pedestrian-oriented environment because it enables people to travel to business and leisure destinations without the need to use a car. Transit also helps to activate streets through greater pedestrian activity, reduces traffic congestion, and results in a cleaner environment. As the Austin area is at the cusp of receiving an EPA non-attainment designation for ozone emissions, it is imperative that the City plan for integrated transit systems that provide a greater range of transportation choices. The East Riverside Corridor Plan describes such a system.

The City of Austin is currently investigating the potential for a streetcar or light rail system to connect the Mueller redevelopment area, the University of Texas, the Capitol complex, downtown, and the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. There are two possible routes to connect downtown to the airport, but the recommended route is along East Riverside Drive because the transit line would serve existing neighborhoods, the area already has high transit ridership and the potential for transit-supportive development and redevelopment, and because there is sufficient Right-of-Way for a dedicated median-running transit line without the need for the City to acquire land. Although final route recommendations and system designs are not complete, and funding has not been identified for the rail system, this Master Plan is intended to serve as a guide for future land use regulations and design standards that will be supportive of transit. Since the East Riverside area already contains some of the most well-used bus lines in the city, Riverside Drive is identified as a future rapid bus line on Capital Metro's "All Systems Go" Long Range Transit Plan, so high frequency transit service is planned for the area in the future whether it is urban rail or rapid bus.

Transit and mixed use activity nodes are mutually supportive. Both are necessary for a transit system to be successful because dense, mixed use development supports transit by enabling a greater number of people to live within walking distance of transit stops, in addition to providing commercial services and jobs in a neighborhood.

The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan integrates land use and transit through the creation of compact, walkable, mixed use areas, or 'Hubs,' within approximately ¼ mile of primary transit stops. These Hubs bring together people, jobs, and services and are designed in a way that makes it efficient, safe, and convenient to travel on foot or by bicycle, transit, or car. This type of compact development along transit corridors can provide a variety of housing and mobility options and create active places where people can live, work, shop, interact and recreate. Benefits of dense, transit-supportive development include:

- Create greater mobility choice through improved travel options (walking, bicycling, transit, etc.)
- Decrease auto use and lessen the negative impacts of the automobile: contribution to traffic congestion and air pollution, high household spending on transportation, consumption of fossil fuels, and excessive parking needs.
- Create interesting and active places to live, work and play
- Achieve healthier lifestyles due to increased walking and bicycling
- Create active places and livable communities that serve daily needs and where people feel a sense of

belonging and ownership

- Improve the design quality of the built environment
- Include engaging, high quality public spaces (e.g. small parks or plazas) as organizing features and gathering places for the neighborhood
- Encourage a variety of housing types near transit facilities available to a wide range of ages and incomes
- Enables community benefits such as affordable housing, open space and bicycle facilities to be funded or created through development bonuses allowing building entitlements greater than what is allowed by base zoning in exchange for the provision of specified community benefits.
- Introduce creative parking strategies that integrate, rather than divide properties and reduce the sense of auto domination

Transit Recommendations:

Introduce streetcar/light rail service on East Riverside Drive

The public's desire for rail transit in the Corridor was clear in the planning process, as the construction of a rail line was rated as one of the highest priorities for desired change in the planning area. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan recommends the implementation of a light rail or streetcar line, consistent with the recommendations of the Downtown Austin Plan Urban Rail Connections Study. The rail line would serve the East Riverside Corridor area by connecting it to downtown, the Capitol complex, the University of Texas, the Capital Metro commuter rail line, and the airport. The East Riverside Corridor area already has high bus ridership some of which could support a light rail or streetcar line by providing ridership on opening day. The rail line would enable existing and future employers and residents of the East Riverside Corridor area to travel conveniently to locations and services both within and outside the Corridor without the need for a car. Rail can be part of a comprehensive transportation network that is being discussed as part of the City's Strategic Mobility Plan. As traffic congestion is one of the greatest challenges to the City's quality of life and economic vitality, alternative mobility options need to be supported where viable.

Exhibit 2.1 Rail Transit Route Map illustrates the rail transit recommendations made in this Plan. The blue line represents the potential alignment of a rail transit system along East Riverside Drive. For most of the Corridor, rail is located in the center median that divides east and west bound traffic. The exception to this alignment occurs between Wickersham Lane and Willow Creek Drive, where it is proposed that the transit line would separate from the vehicular lanes to create a transit plaza on the north side of the current median at the E. Riverside Drive and Pleasant Valley Road intersection. Arrows are shown at each end of the Corridor to indicate rail service connections to downtown and the airport.

Four primary rail stops are recommended along the portion of the proposed rail line within the planning area. The placement of these stops was carefully considered in conjunction with the potential for development of Hubs along East Riverside Drive and studies conducted as part of the Urban Rail Connections Study. Within the planning area, major transit stops are envisioned near the following cross streets: South Lakeshore Boulevard/ Tinnin Ford Road, South Pleasant Valley Drive, and Airport Commerce Drive. A stop somewhere between Grove Boulevard and Montopolis Drive will also be a critical link in the transit service. Approximate five and ten minute walking distances are shown around each of the primary transit stops to demonstrate the principal service areas of each station.

Secondary rail stops are depicted in grey and intended to represent the desire for frequent stops along East Riverside Drive. This dual set of stations allows for a greater level of flexibility in transit scheduling and service, as trains could potentially be scheduled to stop at the secondary stops less frequently than at the primary stops. Final determination of rail stop locations will be identified through future engineering and environmental studies for the rail line. This Master Plan will serve as a guide in evaluating where stops should be located.

Create identifiable places, or "Hubs," along East Riverside Drive around the primary transit stops

To create a symbiosis between the neighborhood and rail, identifiable centers, or "Hubs," should be created around the proposed primary transit stops. The Hubs should have higher density, concentrated, mixed use development to support transit and retail, and to provide amenities for transit riders and the community. The Hubs would provide distinct destinations along the rail line,

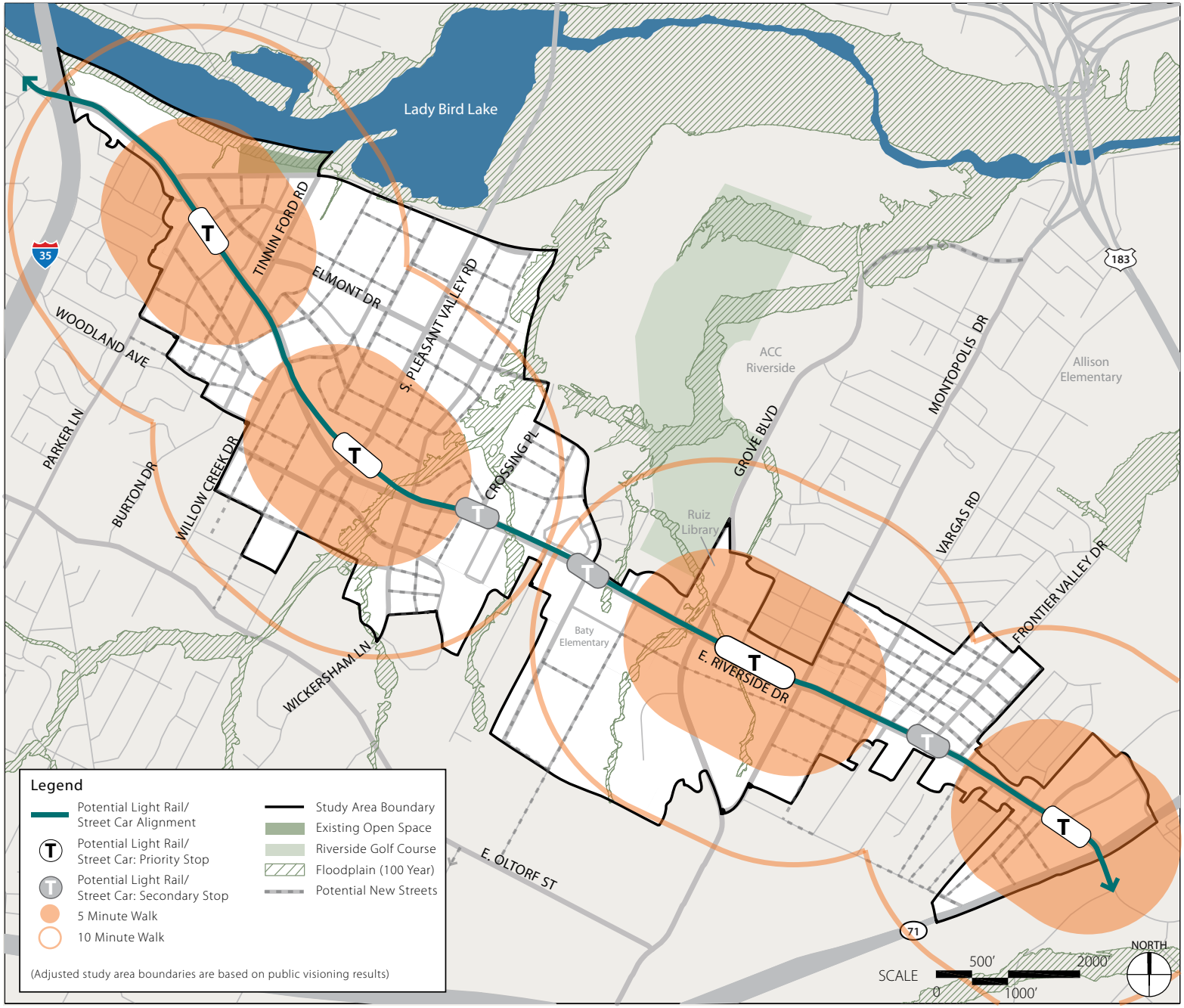


Exhibit 2.1:
Rail Transit Route Map

where housing, shops, and offices would be accessible within a 5 minute walk of the stop. See Section 4 Land Use and Density for a more detailed description and recommendations regarding Hubs around the primary transit stops.

Coordinate bus service with rail service to create a unified transit network

In addition to rail, there will still be a continued need for bus service in the area to complement the rail line and serve areas not directly adjacent to the rail line. There are numerous existing bus routes that serve the East Riverside Corridor area, creating many connections between the planning area and the rest of the city. Information about existing bus routes can be found in the existing conditions section of Appendix A. Additional or modified bus routes will be needed to fully integrate rail and bus transit.

Bus Rapid Transit, a form of bus service with fewer stops and predictable, on time schedules, was recommended for East Riverside Drive as part of Capital Metro's "All Systems Go" Long Range Transit Plan. This will be an alternate transit option if rail is not implemented along the Corridor.

East Riverside Drive

East Riverside Drive is the most significant street in the planning area; however, the current condition of the roadway and adjacent development makes it inhospitable to anyone traveling outside of a vehicle. Planning participants expressed a strong desire to see portions of the roadway function more like a "Main Street", with continued vehicular access but with a greatly improved pedestrian experience. A transformed Riverside Drive would have wide sidewalks with landscaping and street trees buffering pedestrians from traffic, convenient access to transit, and safe bicycle facilities. Riverside Drive should have safe and comfortable ways for pedestrians to cross the road, and simply become an enjoyable place to be.

Recommendations for East Riverside Drive:

Redesign East Riverside Drive as a multi-modal corridor that allows for safe and efficient travel for all transportation modes

In order to accommodate the proposed light rail or streetcar line along East Riverside Drive, the street will have to be redesigned and rebuilt, providing an opportunity to improve the street design to better accommodate all forms of transportation, not just automobiles. In the public planning process, participants stressed the need for East Riverside Drive to be a place for pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, and a streetcar or light rail line.

To illustrate how to accommodate all of those uses, typical street sections for East Riverside Drive and other street types in the planning area are provided in this section (See Exhibit 2.2) and in Appendix C. These street sections include representations of travel lanes and direction, transit alignment, potential building locations, street tree and lighting placement, and sidewalk configuration. The most significant potential change for East Riverside Drive is the transformation of this road from an auto-oriented road to a multimodal corridor that accommodates vehicles, a new light rail or streetcar line, bicycles, and pedestrians. This includes, from the outside edge of the streetscape area to the middle of the roadway, buildings built up to the sidewalk edge, wide sidewalks with street trees, an on-street bicycle lane, three lanes of traffic for each direction of traffic, and

Line 41 — Bike Lanes

Line 47 — Walking

Line 5 — Landscaped Boulevard with Parallel Parking

a transit line in the center of the roadway. The vehicular traffic lanes are needed for efficient traffic flow. Exhibit 2.2 shows a typical street section but the East Riverside Drive design may vary at different locations along the corridor due to available Right-of-Way and other factors.

Provide a designated bicycle lane along East Riverside Drive with special pavement treatment to emphasize the cycling environment

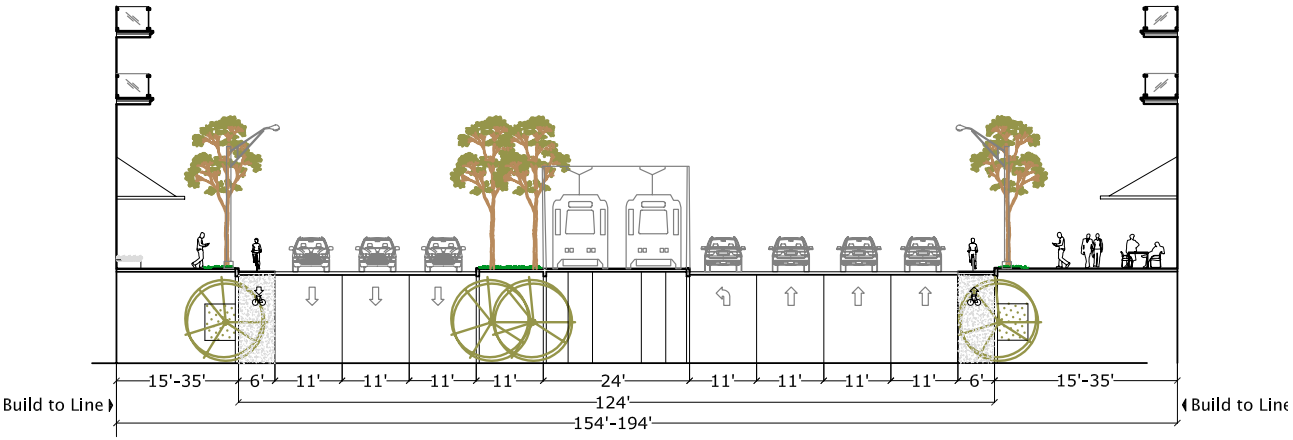
The street section depicts dedicated one way bicycle lanes on each side of East Riverside Drive. An integral curb design and colored materials should be used for the bicycle lanes to clearly distinguish it from the vehicular roadway. On-street bicycle lanes are recommended along both sides of East Riverside Drive to ensure cyclists are visible to drivers on this relatively high-speed road. The on-street bicycle lane also separates cyclists from pedestrians on the sidewalks, ensuring that cyclists and pedestrians don't conflict. The on-street bicycle lanes on East Riverside Drive are designed for experienced cyclists. Other proposed streets and bike routes in the area will accommodate less experienced cyclists.

Along East Riverside Drive provide wide sidewalks with an ample landscaped street tree/furniture zone to provide a buffer between pedestrian and automobile traffic

A central feature of the vision for the corridor is a more pedestrian friendly East Riverside Drive. Wide sidewalks, landscape and street tree buffers to separate the pedestrian from the busy roadway, shade and weather protection, and buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk all contribute to a high quality pedestrian environment. Because Riverside Drive is an arterial that provides for regional traffic movement, no reduction in the number of automobile lanes is proposed, but in the future the City could consider converting the outside lanes to on-street parking during off-peak hours to support local business and new residential activity and to provide further buffer between pedestrian/bicyclist activity and automobile traffic.

Exhibit 2.2:

East Riverside Drive Typical Street Section*



**Note: This cross section is conceptual and could be refined as part of rail planning and design. Necessary Right-of-Way will be determined based on final design.*

Provide safety improvements at intersections to facilitate pedestrian flow across Riverside Drive

Exhibit 2.7 Intersection Improvements Map identifies existing intersections with traffic signals and potential improvements that can be made at intersections along the Corridor. While many prominent intersections already have traffic signals, additional signalization may be necessary at specific locations such as Crossing Place and Frontier Valley Drive. Specially designed intersection improvements will also increase pedestrian safety, with the goal of creating an environment where even children are comfortable crossing the street. Enhanced intersections that incorporate a system of crosswalks and pedestrian signals can enhance pedestrian access to transit while safely facilitating the movement of vehicles throughout the planning area. Enhanced intersections could incorporate a number of these elements: special crosswalk paving, signage, lighting, signalization, landscaping and pedestrian refuge islands. Many of the intersections designated for potential pedestrian improvements were identified during the public visioning process as problematic intersections. At present, warrants would have to be met to add additional traffic signals. If rail is approved, there may be other opportunities to add additional traffic signals.

Street Network Improvements

The Master Plan recommends a series of new streets and street improvements designed to promote the more efficient flow of pedestrians, bike and vehicular traffic, and to create a series of developable blocks. Because a city's streets are the most prevalent of all public spaces, special attention should be paid to both the function and form of existing and potential new streets. Properly designing a city's streets represents an opportunity to create unique and memorable places for the community. The best streets in a community become known as places to gather, shop, recreate, and to simply be. Research has also shown that areas with a highly connected street grid with many intersections results in fewer vehicle/pedestrian fatalities, making the area safer for pedestrians.

Street Network Recommendations:

As redevelopment occurs, create an interconnected network of streets and walkable blocks. The street network should provide a clear hierarchy of arterial streets, collector streets, and local streets.

The current street system in the Area suffers from gaps in the roadway network, includes many large blocks that discourage pedestrian and bicycle travel and produce an over-reliance on East Riverside Drive as the major transportation artery in the area. The Plan calls for the creation of a more complete network of roadways comprised of three types of streets: arterials, collectors, and local streets to improve pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicular mobility in the area. Exhibit 2.3 Street Network Map identifies classification of existing and potential new streets within the planning area.

Potential new streets are indicated as dashed lines on the Street Network Map. Potential new collector streets are shown as dashed orange lines while dashed brown lines are used to indicate the potential placement of new smaller local streets. The vast majority of recommended new streets are smaller local streets. Potential cross-sections for each street type are provided in Appendix C, to be used as a guide for the design of new streets as properties redevelop.

These streets are designed to work together to accommodate a mix of vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic, and to create a series of "Main Street" areas in the Corridor, a feature that has been identified as desirable by the public through the planning process. New streets are recommended to be added to the network of existing streets at strategic locations in order to create pedestrian friendly "walkable blocks," allowing residents to efficiently walk, bike, or drive to the rail and bus stops, coffee shops, restaurants, grocery stores, civic facilities, and Lady Bird Lake without having to travel on major arterials and through already overcrowded intersections.

The placement of potential new streets within the Corridor shown in Exhibit 2.3 was based on environmental considerations, existing development and property line locations, and minimizing traffic impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. The number of potential new streets that cross the flood plain was kept to a minimum to protect environmentally sensitive land and to reduce the number of costly bridges that would be necessary. Final alignment and design may vary based upon specific site characteristics, available Right-Of-Way and development projects and proposals.

The Master Plan also recommends that a portion of East Riverside Drive from Willow Creek Drive to Wickersham Lane be studied for possible realignment and improvements that would permit the addition of a transit plaza at the intersection of Pleasant Valley Road to coordinate with the light rail or streetcar line. This concept is discussed in more detail on the following pages.

Hierarchy of Streets

Arterials

East Riverside Drive is an important arterial street in the City's arterial street system. In general, arterial streets represent primary thoroughfares designed to move relatively high volumes of traffic. East Riverside Drive is the spine of the Corridor and the principal east-west connection that links IH-35 to Ben White Boulevard/ SH 71. East Riverside Drive will continue to function as an arterial street in the future even though certain aspects of its form may be altered to reduce speed levels thereby becoming more pedestrian-friendly in nature, and incorporate transit travel, landscaping elements, and other design elements. Other existing arterials in the area are: Lakeshore Boulevard, Pleasant Valley Road, and Grove Boulevard. These existing arterials should be repurposed to accommodate multiple modes of transportation, not only automobiles. Bicycle facilities and continuous shaded sidewalks should be provided along the arterials to provide direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

Collector Streets

Collector streets are indicated in orange on the Street Network Map. These streets serve to collect traffic from other streets, functioning as direct routes to arterials or other collector streets. New collector streets proposed in the plan are designed to accommodate vehicular traffic, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Streets designated as potential new collectors for the area should be built in the locations specified on the map by private developers as land development occurs. These collectors will provide a continuous route connecting neighborhoods and destinations. To the extent possible, potential collector streets were placed along existing parcel lines to minimize the impact on adjacent properties. Because of the importance of the collector street connections on the street network and flow of traffic, the City should consider developing a Collector Plan requiring the collectors be built as properties redevelop.

Local Streets

Potential new local streets are shown in dashed brown lines on the Street Network Map. Local streets will be built by private developers as redevelopment occurs, but their final locations will be influenced by development project plans and other site considerations. These streets are primarily intended to serve traffic within a neighborhood or within a limited district. Local streets can be designed to slow traffic by using narrower lanes and encouraging on-street parking. The majority of new streets recommended for the area fall into this category. These potential new local streets represent an opportunity to make walking easier, more convenient, and attractive thereby enhancing pedestrian access to transit.

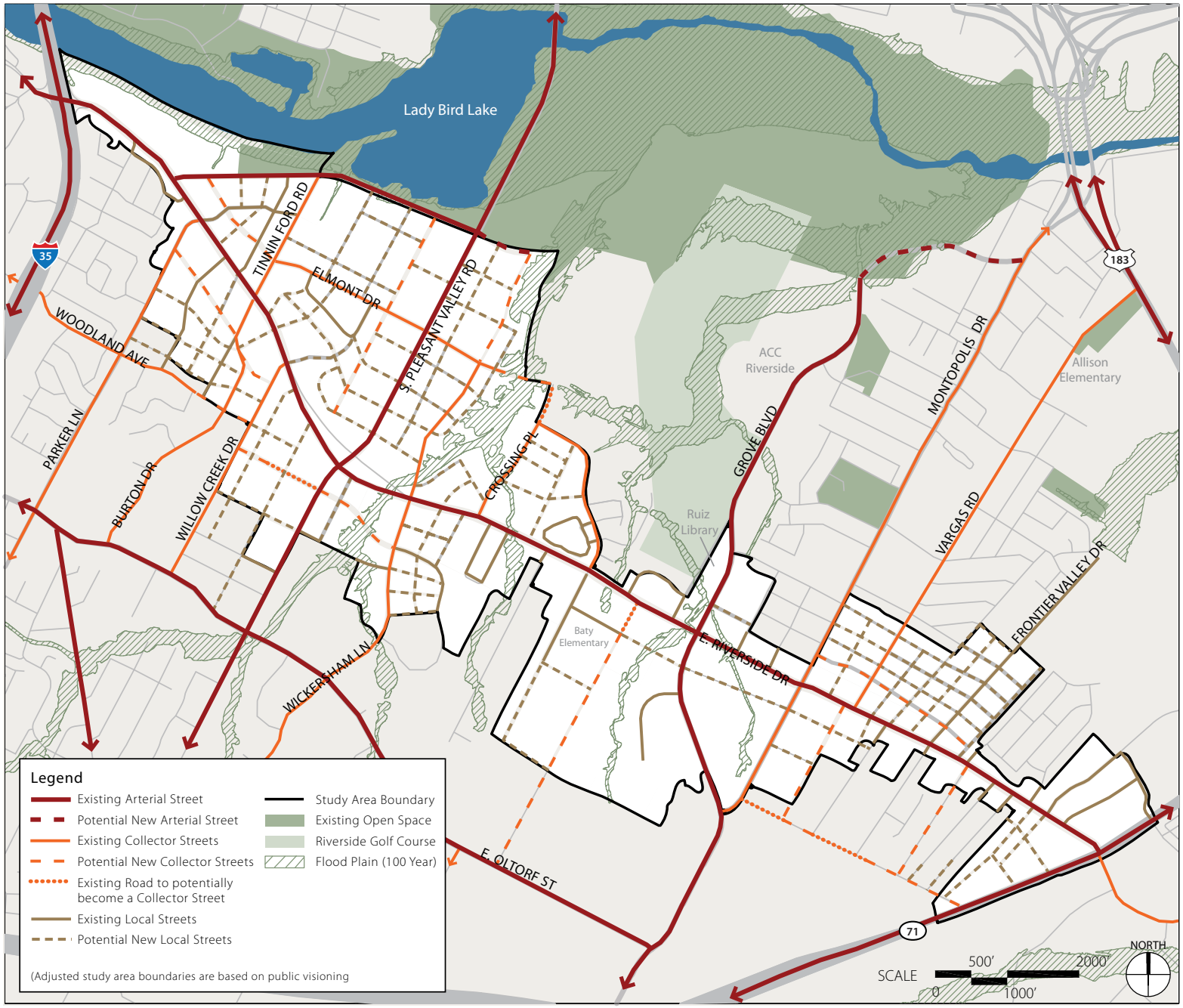


Exhibit 2.3:
Street Network Map

Intersection/Transit Plaza at East Riverside and South Pleasant Valley

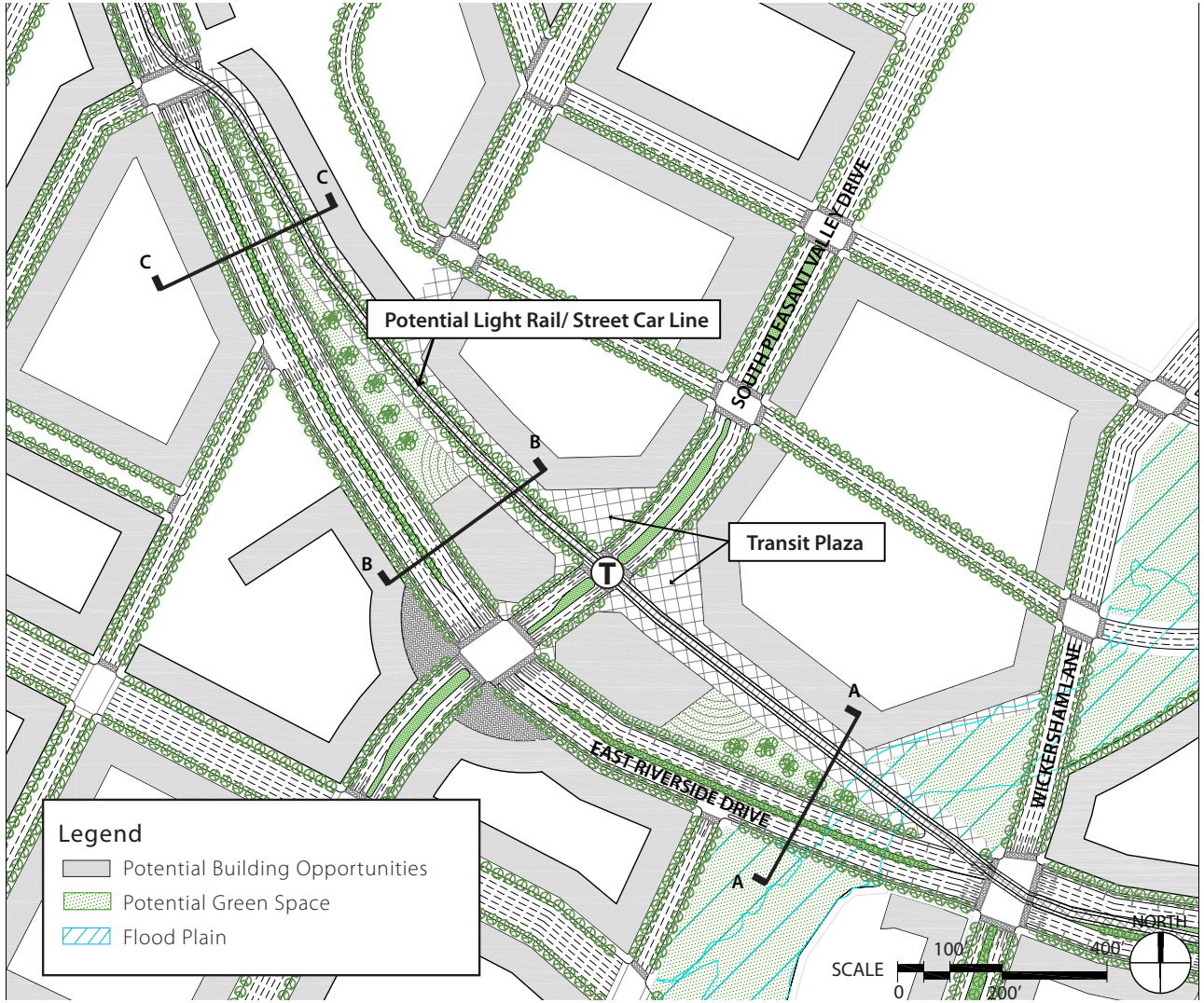
The intersection of East Riverside Drive and South Pleasant Valley Road received special attention during the planning process due to its importance to the Corridor and because of the potential addition of a light rail or streetcar line along East Riverside Drive. Today, east and west bound traffic on East Riverside Drive is separated from Willow Creek Drive to Wickersham Lane by a large and sloping median. West bound traffic is carried on the northern lanes of East Riverside Drive while east bound traffic runs on the southern side. By transforming this intersection from one that is dominated by automobiles to one that functions as a commercial and transit center, the re-design of the intersection could reinvigorate the East Riverside Corridor and become a true neighborhood center for the area.

Transit Plaza Recommendations:

Evaluate the opportunity to realign East Riverside Drive to create a prominent transit plaza and new developable parcels at the Pleasant Valley intersection

Exhibit 2.4: East Riverside and South Pleasant Valley Intersection Diagram illustrates a vision for realignment of this intersection. The Master Plan proposes widening the southern portion of East Riverside Drive between Wickersham Lane and Willow Creek Drive in order to accommodate both east and west bound traffic on this stretch of the road. Placing all vehicular traffic on the southern portion of East Riverside Drive permits the alignment of a potential light rail or streetcar line along the northern portion of the existing roadway. This would require significant changes to the existing grade, assessment and potential relocation of existing utilities, and resolution of drainage issues.

Exhibit 2.4:
*East Riverside and South Pleasant Valley Intersection Diagram**



*Note: This plan is conceptual and assumes utility pole, grade, soil stability, and flood plain issues can be resolved.

The potential location for a transit stop serving this area is shown on the Exhibit 2.4 near the northern intersection of East Riverside Drive and South Pleasant Valley Road. This realignment of East Riverside Drive combined with the creation of significant public plaza and green space, as well as development opportunities along the Corridor could serve as a catalyst project for the East Riverside area and could transform the existing automobile-dominated intersection into a family-friendly vibrant commercial center serving adjacent neighborhoods. A market in the plaza could provide opportunities for small businesses to have access to a large number of pedestrians. The development of the current median space could be a catalyst project for the area. Development of this City-owned vacant land could incorporate several elements of the Master Plan vision including the provision of affordable housing, employment/office space, and public gathering spaces.

Recommended street sections of East Riverside Drive and the proposed transit plaza area are shown in Exhibit 2.5 to illustrate the potential re-configuration of sidewalks, vehicular lanes, and transit in the transit plaza area. Sections were prepared for three locations which are indicated with a letter on Exhibit 2.4.

Sections are taken just west of Wickersham Lane (A-A), just west of South Pleasant Valley Drive (B-B), and between two new potential streets to the east of Willow Creek Drive (C-C). These sections illustrate how vehicular lanes are located on the southern portion of the roadway while a potential transit line is accommodated on the existing west bound lanes of East Riverside Drive. As the median widens, Section B-B illustrates how a building that fronts on both the newly reconfigured East Riverside Drive and the transit line could be constructed.

Sections B-B and C-C demonstrate one approach to dealing with the significant grade change that occurs on this section of East Riverside Drive. Much of the grade change could be built into the structure of a building and accommodated on landscaped areas along the roadway and between the east and west bound lanes. Level land is maintained for sidewalks and semi-public edges, travel lanes, the transit line, and bicycle lanes.

Potential obstacles to this proposal include the potential need to relocate or accommodate existing utility transmission lines in the median, addressing drainage issues, and expansive soil conditions. The transit plaza concept could be modified to address or work around some of these issues. The conceptual design will need to be evaluated for feasibility and cost as part of future rail feasibility analyses.

Example of Desired Transit Plaza

EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE TRANSIT PLAZA **Section A-A**

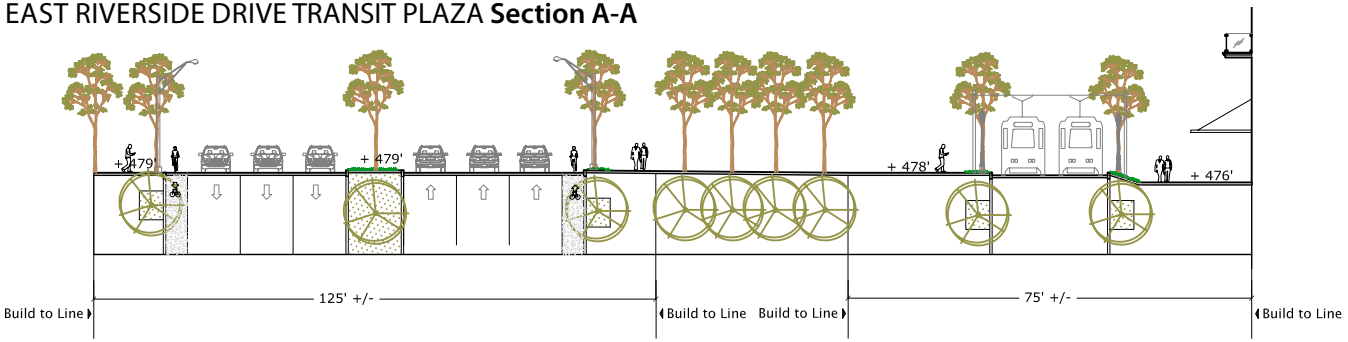
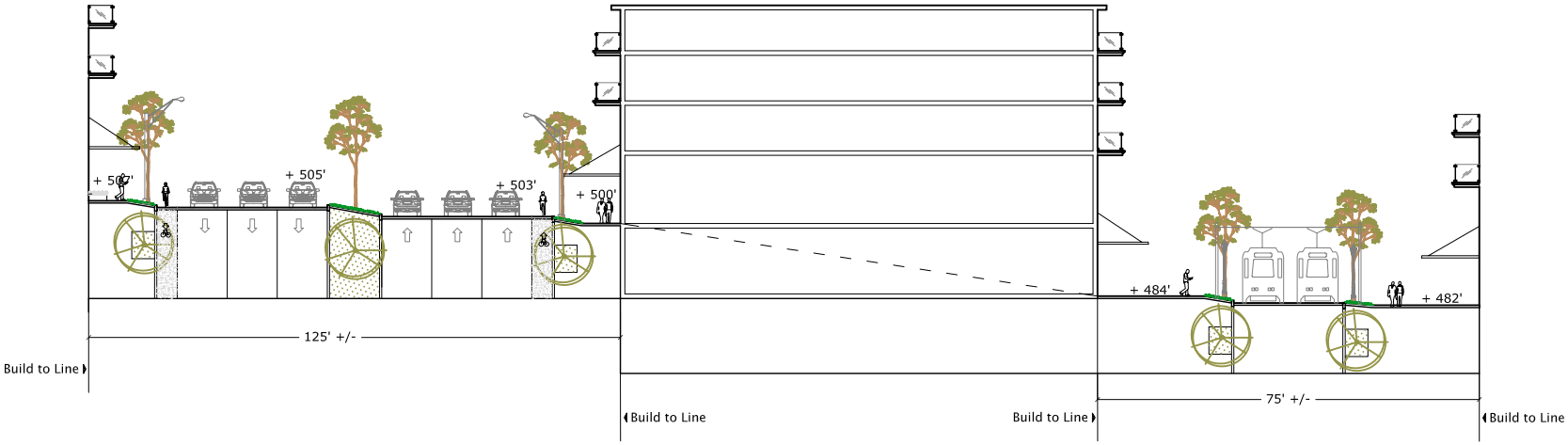
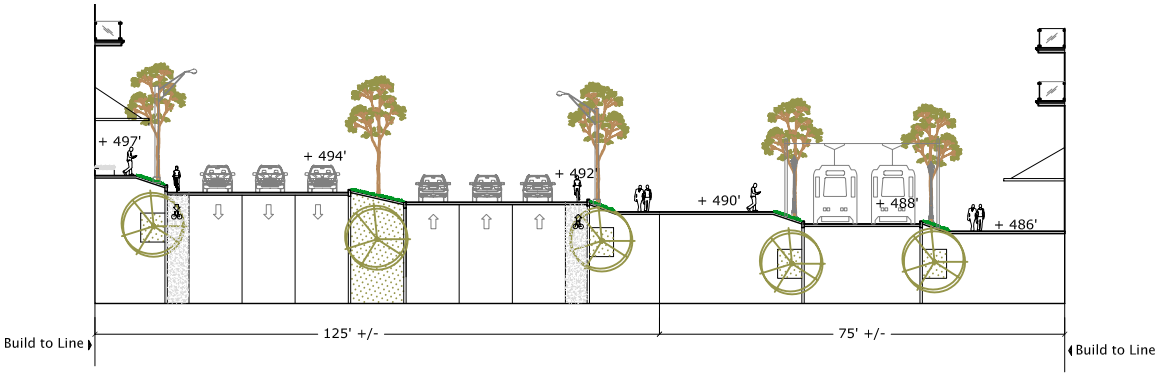


Exhibit 2.5:
East Riverside Drive Street Section @ Intersection with South Pleasant Valley*

EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE TRANSIT PLAZA **Section B-B**



EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE TRANSIT PLAZA **Section C-C**



**Note: These cross sections are conceptual and could be refined as part of rail planning and design. Necessary Right-of-Way will be determined based on final design.*

Bicycle Circulation

Bicycling is an important mode of transportation that is often overlooked between provisions for cars and pedestrians. Cycling should be a safe and fast journey to and from retail shops, offices, transit stations, institutional and civic places, parks, and adjacent neighborhoods. While cyclists are often a part of vehicular traffic, certain requirements should be met in order to ensure their safety and encourage proper cyclist behavior. Many existing residential streets within the planning area are already conducive to bicycle travel because they are sufficiently wide to accommodate both bicycles and vehicles and because traffic moving on them is sufficiently slow. New streets proposed for the Corridor should be designed to be bicycle friendly. The Master Plan recommends several specific measures designed to facilitate cycling.

Several bike routes exist within the planning area providing a basic network for bicycles. Most of the facilities in this area are bike lanes or routes on roadways; however, there is also a trail through Roy G. Guererro Colorado River Park. The main existing bicycle routes are on the following roads: East Riverside Drive, Arena Dr/Parker Lane, Pleasant Valley Road, Wickersham Lane, Grove Boulevard, Montopolis Boulevard, and Vargas Road.

Bicycle Circulation Recommendations:

Include a mix of striped bicycle lanes and off-street bicycle paths to serve multiple needs and levels of cycling experience

Exhibit 2.6 Bicycle Circulation Map illustrates recommended bicycle lanes and paths through the Corridor and surrounding area. In agreement with the City of Austin Bicycle Plan, East Riverside Corridor Master Plan recommends that on-street designated integrated curb bicycle lanes, be added to East Riverside Drive along the length of the entire Corridor. Integrated curb bicycle lanes are an extension of the gutter and are built of concrete, thereby creating a visually distinct zone for bicyclists. The concrete could be colored to make them even more distinct from the roadway. These lanes are envisioned on each side of East Riverside as illustrated in Exhibit 2.2 East Riverside Drive Street Section.

More traditional on-street bicycle lanes are recommended on several other streets throughout the planning area. On-street lanes are striped bicycle travel lanes that are typically a minimum of five feet in width when located on streets without parking and at least six feet in width when located adjacent to on-street parking. Major new north-south bicycle lanes are envisioned on Parker Lane, South Pleasant Valley Road, Grove Boulevard, Montopolis Drive, Vargas Road, and a potential future extension of Lawrence Street.

The Master Plan also recommends a system of off-street bicycle paths to complete the local bicycle network and provide links to regional bicycle connections, as described below.

Bike paths should complement and link to existing and proposed trails and parks

In most cases, proposed bicycle paths shown on Exhibit 2.6 complement and complete existing trails through the area. Off-street bicycle paths provide a safe cycling option for recreational and novice cyclists and children that may not be as comfortable riding with traffic on streets. A critical component to the bicycle network is the completion of the partially constructed Country Club Creek Trail with an underpass at East Riverside Drive, which follows the floodplain through the planning area between South Pleasant Valley Drive and Crossing Lane. The Country Club Creek Trail will provide north-south access connecting many residential neighborhoods to East Riverside Drive, regional parks and the Lady Bird Lake Hike and Bike Trail.

Although partially outside of the boundaries of the Master Plan area, the Lady Bird Lake Hike and Bike trail provides a major open space resource in the region. At present, gaps in the trail system, from approximately Congress Avenue to Lakeshore Drive, limit the potential use of the trail because trail users are forced onto a narrow sidewalk directly adjacent to East Riverside Drive, an experience many people find unpleasant. The Trail Foundation has proposed closing the gaps in the trail system and the City has begun preliminary engineering studies for the project. Completion of the trail would enhance recreational opportunities in the area and for the entire region and connect the eastern and western sections of the Lady Bird Lake trail. The City should make completion of the trail a high priority over the next few years.

Provide adequate bicycle parking and shower facilities

Providing appropriate facilities for the end of the bicycle trip is an important component for encouraging people to switch from driving to biking for various trips. In order to promote a bicycle-friendly environment, convenient bicycle racks and bike lockers should be provided throughout the Corridor for employees, residents, and customers. The Land Development Code section 25-6-477 defines minimum bicycle parking requirements for development; but additional bicycle parking, and especially covered parking, should be provided, where possible. In the heat of the summer, showers are a necessity for commuter cyclists and thus offices and other employment centers should be encouraged to provide shower facilities for their employees.

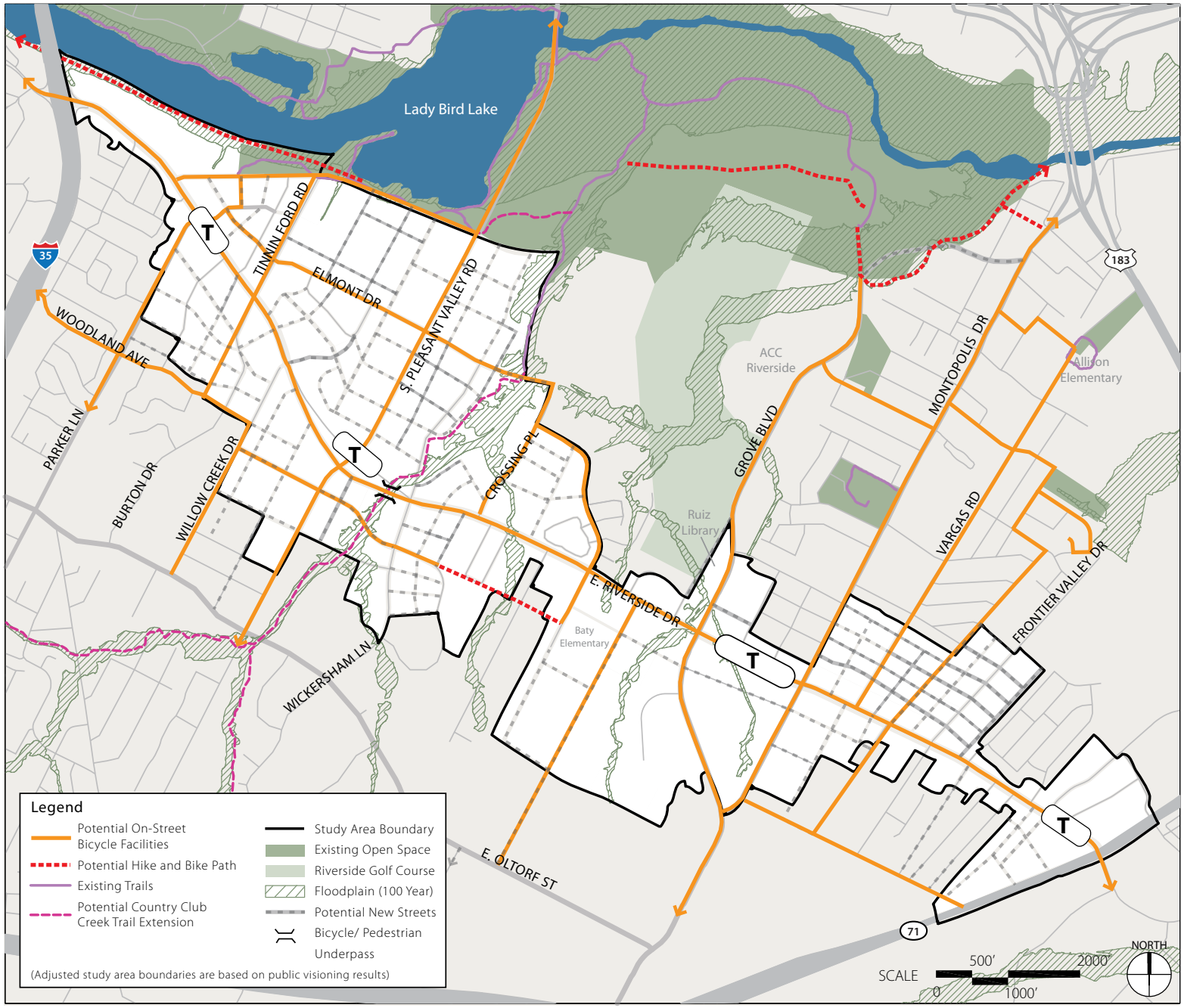


Exhibit 2.6:
Bicycle Circulation Map

The Pedestrian Environment

Creating a safe, comfortable, interesting and active pedestrian environment is one of the key goals of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan. A high quality pedestrian environment is not just an aesthetic improvement but provides significant mobility, economic, and health benefits for the community.

The Master Plan envisions a transformation of the East Riverside Corridor from one dominated by the auto and surface parking to an area with mixed use development concentrated near rail transit stops. The quality of the pedestrian environment is essential to this transformation, maximizing the use of alternate modes of transportation such as walking, biking and transit, and mitigating the negative impacts of a transportation system that relies too heavily on the automobile.

The pedestrian realm is made up of the spaces used by the people walking in the city, and consists of sidewalks, crosswalks, and paths and trails. The current conditions in the Corridor pose a barrier to pedestrian mobility, which this plan attempts to rectify by improving connectivity in the area, improving sidewalk and streetscape standards, and by adding boulevards to improve the pedestrian experience.

Examples of Textured Crosswalks & Pedestrian Signals

Pedestrian Environment Recommendations:

Improve the Streetscape to Make Walking Safe, Comfortable and Interesting

In all parts of the planning area, the pedestrian experience should be safe, accessible, and interesting in order to encourage walking as a transportation choice. In addition to providing adequate sidewalk infrastructure in the form of continuous wide sidewalks connecting destinations, special efforts to ensure that the pedestrian realm is pleasant and inviting can have a tremendous impact on the number of people walking to destinations and transit, the number of families just going out for a stroll and how the planning area is identified and perceived. Initial streetscape improvements should be focused in and leading to the areas around future rail transit stops.

One of the best ways to encourage walking is to make walking interesting and comfortable by providing visual stimulus and weather protection in the form of buildings with ground floor active uses, streetscape elements, shading, and landscaping. Commercial buildings that are built near the edge of the sidewalk prioritizes pedestrians over vehicles by limiting parking to the interior, sides, and rear of buildings. See Section 5 Urban Design Guidelines for more detailed recommendations on improving the streetscape.

One consideration to keep in mind, however, is that wider sidewalks, tree planting areas, and boulevards within the same fixed rights-of-way of the existing streets can compromise the capacity of the street for motorists. The East Riverside Corridor Planning Area has an advantage in that many of the street right-of-ways are wide and the streets are functioning under capacity for most of the day. In most cases the space exists to design for wider sidewalks without reducing vehicular capacity.

Enhance Key Transit Stops

The increased use of public transportation is central to the creation of viable and sustainable mixed use development. However, the lack of amenities and proper signage at many transit stops can reduce the attraction of public transit to potential riders. The City, area developers and Capital Metro should focus on the design and maintenance of current and future transit stops in the East Riverside Corridor to maximize transit use now and in the future as rail becomes a reality. Potential steps include:

- Improve current and future stops which are located near important pedestrian crossings, at bus route transfer stations and at culturally or historically important places;

- Adjacent developments should embrace transit stops as public places and incorporate enhanced transit stops and shelters into their design;

- Consider pedestrian comfort and safety and provide adequate space, shade, and trees at transit stops in the development of site plans. Protection from the elements, and especially the sun, is essential in the planning area. Various shade-producing elements are encouraged for the Corridor, including pergolas, awnings, and arcades. These should be considered for use at transit stops;

- Incorporate civic art into key transit stops.

Provide Protection from Cars

Pedestrians should also be able to move easily and safely along and across East Riverside Drive, as well as along and across other existing and proposed streets in the area. On-street parallel parking should be present when possible to buffer the pedestrian from traffic. Where parallel parking cannot be provided, the curb edge, bollards, street trees, or other decorative features can be used to separate pedestrians from the street.

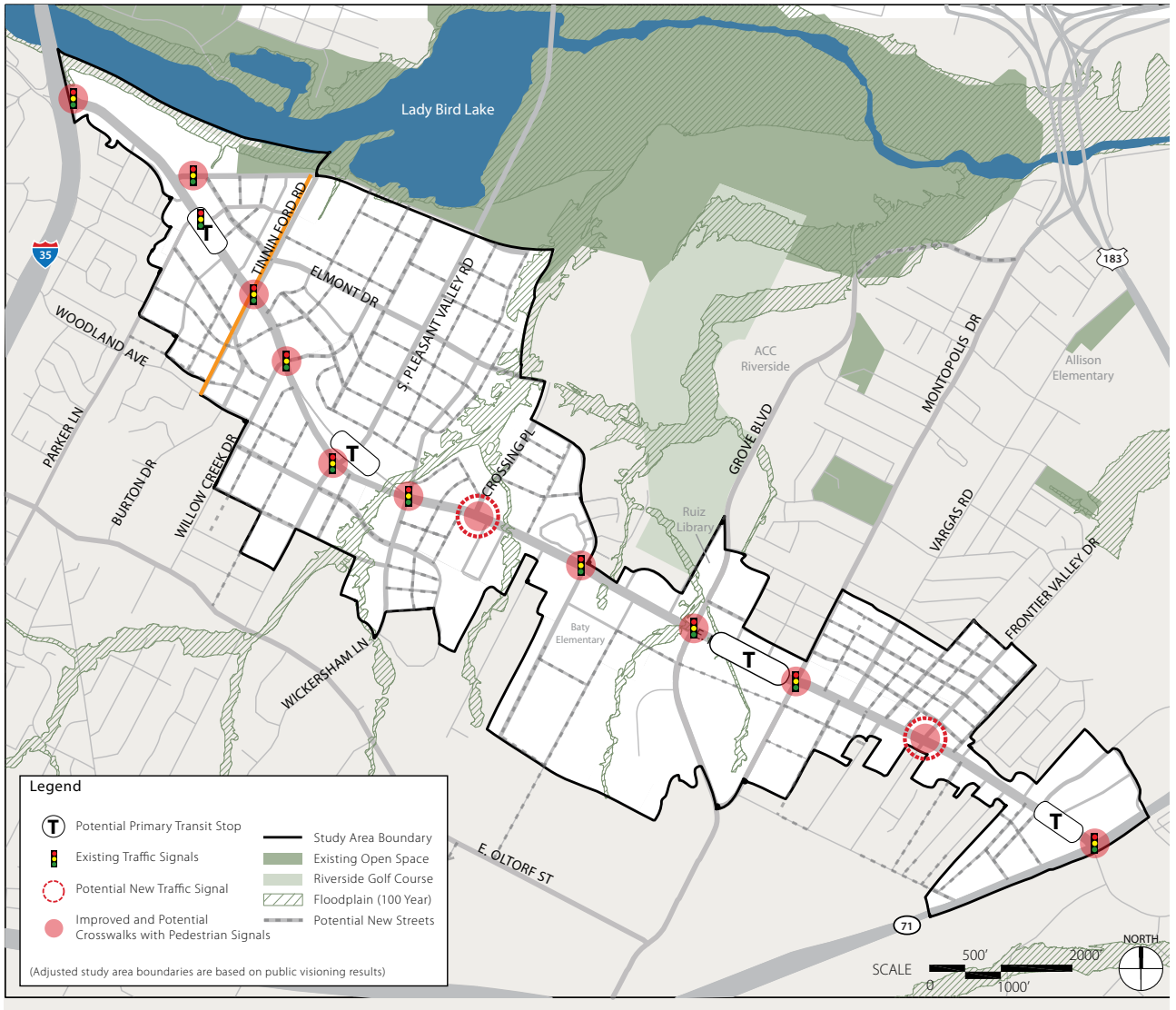
Minimize Driveway Curb Cuts

Driveway curb cuts can create hazards for pedestrians walking on sidewalks along the roadway and for auto traffic on major roadways. Drivers turning into a driveway from the road may not be looking for pedestrians on the sidewalk. Multiple curb-cuts on a roadway can also break up the visual continuity of the buildings and having to cross multiple driveways diminishes the pedestrian experience. In addition, auto traffic turning into driveways can create a conflict with traffic on the roadway. As properties develop or redevelop, to the extent possible, driveways should be located off major streets and be shared to minimize curb cuts, especially fronting arterial roadways.

Pedestrian Crossings of Roadways

To create a pleasant and safe pedestrian environment, there must be adequate pedestrian crossings of roadways. These pedestrian crossings should be safe, comfortable, frequent and conveniently located. Where possible, pedestrian crossings should utilize alternative materials to accentuate the pedestrian crossing areas, signal to on-coming traffic that pedestrians are in the area and help to calm traffic. The construction of a pedestrian underpass where Country Club Creek Tail crosses East Riverside Drive should be a priority to improve pedestrian and bicycle crossing of the roadway. If rail is built along E. Riverside Drive, new pedestrian crossings will be necessary to facilitate pedestrian movement across the rail line.

Exhibit 2.7:
Intersection Improvements Map



SECTION 3

OPEN SPACE

LANDSCAPE & OPEN SPACE

Landscape and Open Space

The northwest portion of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan area is adjacent to the City's treasured Lady Bird Lake Metropolitan Park and Roy G. Guererro Park, but other parts of the Corridor are lacking in open space. Open space provides a range of important benefits: in urban settings it provides gathering places for all types of people and brings life and activity to the street, it preserves natural and environmentally sensitive areas, and it serves recreational and, if properly designed, mobility needs. Public spaces and well-connected neighborhoods play an important role in sustaining social and economic diversity by promoting social interaction on sidewalks and in shared public spaces.

The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan seeks to provide all of these open space benefits through a combination of public and private actions. Exhibit 3.1 identifies potential sites for various types of open spaces such as parks, plazas, and greenways. Specific open space recommendations are provided below.

Open Space Recommendations:

Incorporate a range of types and sizes of open space within the area

A successful open space system provides a variety of opportunities to experience the outdoors – some natural, some urban, some limited to a specific site, some running continuously through a larger area. Different types of open space should be provided in different areas of the East Riverside Corridor, for example urban open space such as plazas, squares, and streetscapes in the Hubs, pocket parks in residential areas, and greenways along creeks or trails. Amenities for children should be integrated into the design of open space, not only in traditional parks, but also into plazas and more urban spaces where people gather. Open space should also be provided at a variety of scales, from the regional park or greenbelt to a neighborhood pocket park or square. A potential transit plaza at the East Riverside Drive/Pleasant Valley Blvd. intersection could create much needed public gathering space in the heart of the Corridor, and allow for an celebrate community markets and other neighborhood activities.

Provide improved connections between Lady Bird Lake and Roy G. Guererro Park to the East Riverside Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods

The East Riverside Corridor area is located close to major regional parks and open space amenities (Lady Bird Lake Metropolitan Park and trail system, and Roy G. Guererro Park) but improved connections and integration with these regional parks is needed for residents and visitors to realize the full benefit of these amenities.

There are several options to provide enhanced connections between these parks and the East Riverside Corridor area including completion of the Country Club

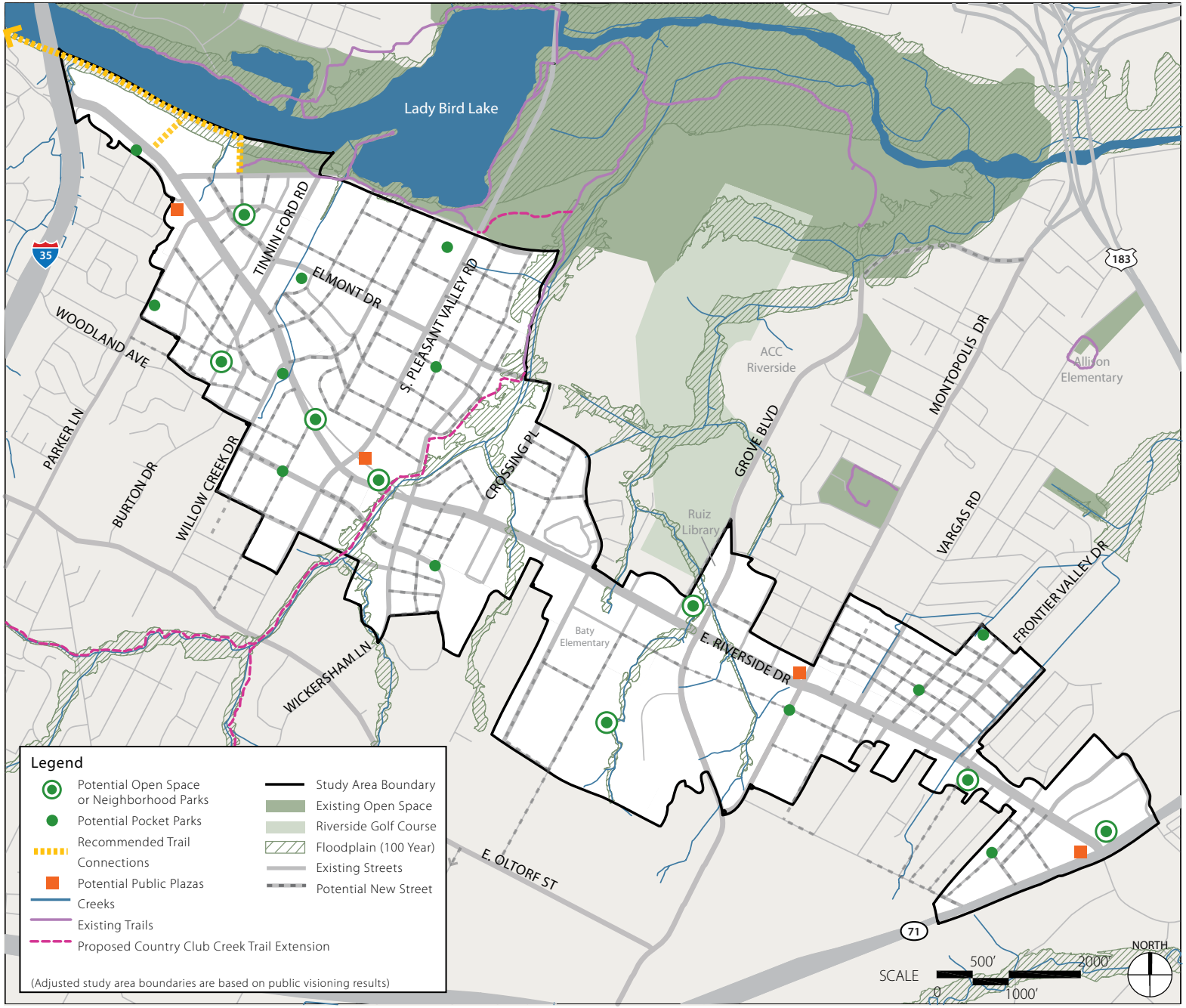


Exhibit 3.1:
Open Space Map

Note: This map represents a conceptual distribution of open space and parks.

Creek trail including an underpass at East Riverside Drive and improved streetscapes and bikeways on major streets leading to Lady Bird Lake and Guerrero Park.

Increase open space in the area south of East Riverside Drive

As mentioned above, the area north of East Riverside Drive is near large regional parks and open space. The Montopolis neighborhood, east of Grove Boulevard, also has several neighborhood parks within its boundaries. In contrast, the area south of East Riverside Drive within the planning area does not currently have any public park land, playscapes or amenities such as a community pool. The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department should actively seek to acquire open space to serve this area.

Prioritize preservation of existing natural areas and trees

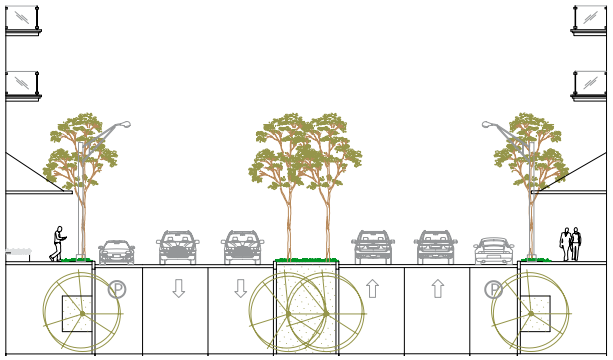
Much of the East Riverside corridor was developed with minimal protection of natural and riparian areas. As new development occurs in the Planning area, remaining natural areas such as floodplain or significant stands of trees should be priorities for preservation as open space. Trees along Lakeshore Drive donated by the Lower Colorado River Authority should be preserved.

Establish a network of shaded streetscapes, bikeways and boulevards to connect open space, major activity centers and transit stops

Streets are a city's most abundant and widespread public space. Streets can also provide new open space, increase access and connections to existing open space, enhance the community's quality of life, and elevate walking, biking and transit as alternatives to the automobile.

While linear amenities such as shaded streetscapes, bikeways and boulevards have not typically been viewed as open space, recent projects in Austin such as the Cesar Chavez promenade, Second Street, or the Lance Armstrong Bikeway demonstrate the capacity for creating active and desirable places for people to gather and recreate along linear spaces.

Boulevards offer another opportunity to both increase open space and enhance pedestrian and bike connections. A boulevard is a major street with a tree or plant-lined center divider median. Boulevards can transform busy streets into an environment that better balances vehicles and pedestrians by dividing the traffic lanes into smaller, more manageable increments, creating safer crossing opportunities for pedestrians, and in some cases provide linear paths within the median. The Master Plan identifies specific pedestrian, bicycle and boulevard linkages throughout the area that can provide these benefits. Exhibit 3.2 Boulevards Map identifies



Example of a boulevard street section

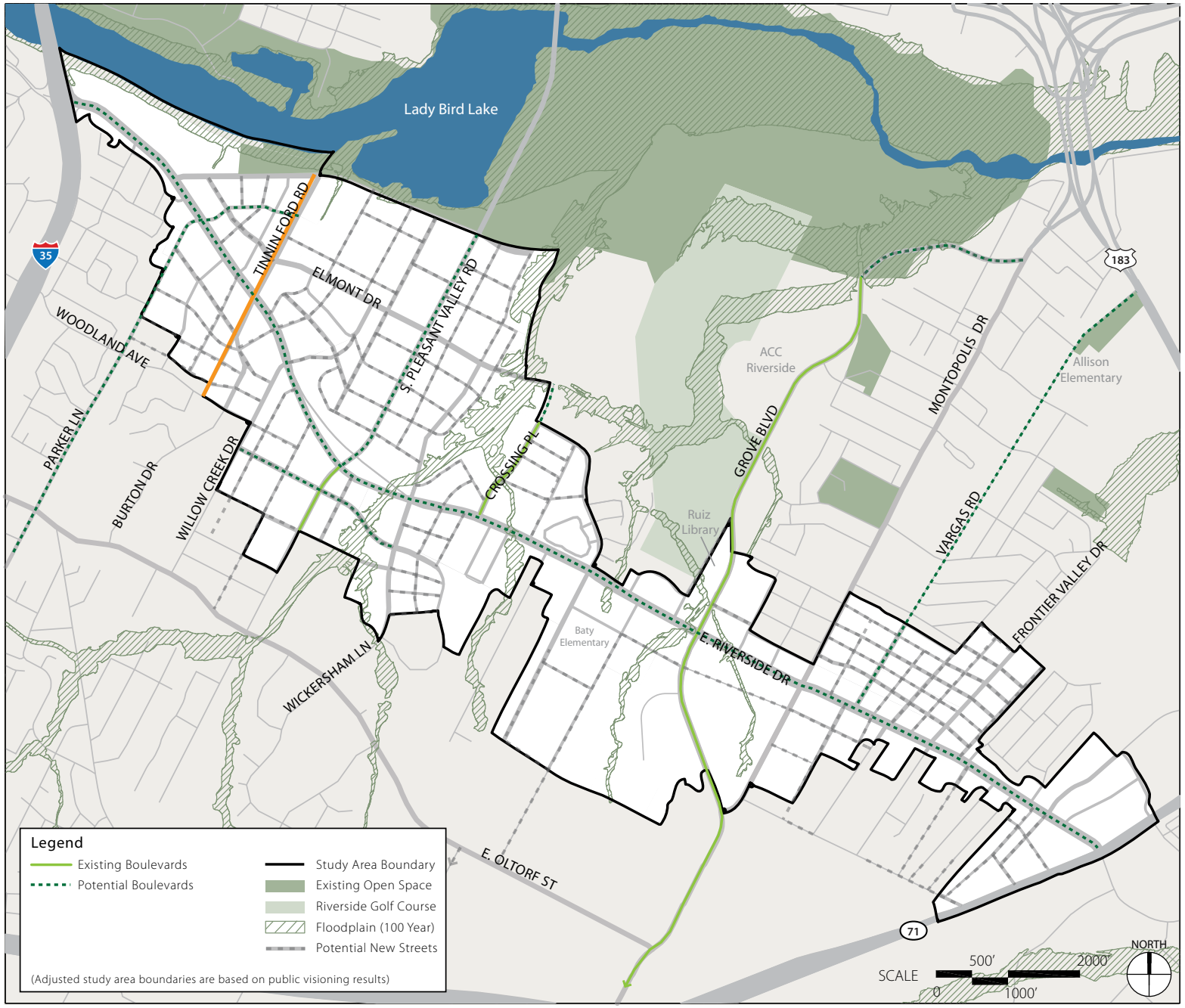


Exhibit 3.2:
Boulevards Map

both existing and potential boulevards within and near the East Riverside Corridor. These could be implemented through future private development, community grants, and City Capital Improvement Projects.

As redevelopment and public improvements occur, require well designed on-site open space. Establish standards to ensure that this open space is of high-quality and part of an overall system rather than remnant areas of private development or public infrastructure projects

In much of the existing development in the East Riverside Corridor open space is not integrated into the design of projects but is frequently the area left over after the project is designed and built. Where open space is provided it is rarely linked to other open space amenities. Future redevelopment of the East Riverside Corridor offers the opportunity to take a more thoughtful approach to creating new, useable open space.

The Design Standards and Mixed Use Subchapter of Austin's Land Development Code established standards for on-site private common open space for all sites 5 acres or larger. These standards should be refined and enhanced as part of the adoption of development regulations for the East Riverside Corridor to ensure new on-site open space is of high quality and creates a network of open space. In addition, larger sites should be required to partially fulfill parkland dedication requirements on-site through the development of public pocket parks and greenway connections.

Integrate open space with green infrastructure/ sustainable stormwater facilities

The East Riverside Corridor has the opportunity to address open space, water quality and stormwater drainage issues through what is sometimes referred to as "green infrastructure". Green infrastructure can manage stormwater runoff, increase open space and enhance community and neighborhood livability by using vegetated swales, rain gardens and other small scale, low impact facilities to manage stormwater runoff at its source. These combined stormwater and open space facilities are discussed in more detail in Section 6: Infrastructure.

Streetscaping Opportunities for the Corridor

SECTION 4

LAND USE & DENSITY

DEVELOPMENT HUBS
CHARACTER OF THE HUBS
PROPOSED LAND USE DISTRICTS
DEVELOPMENT BONUS
RECOMMENDATIONS

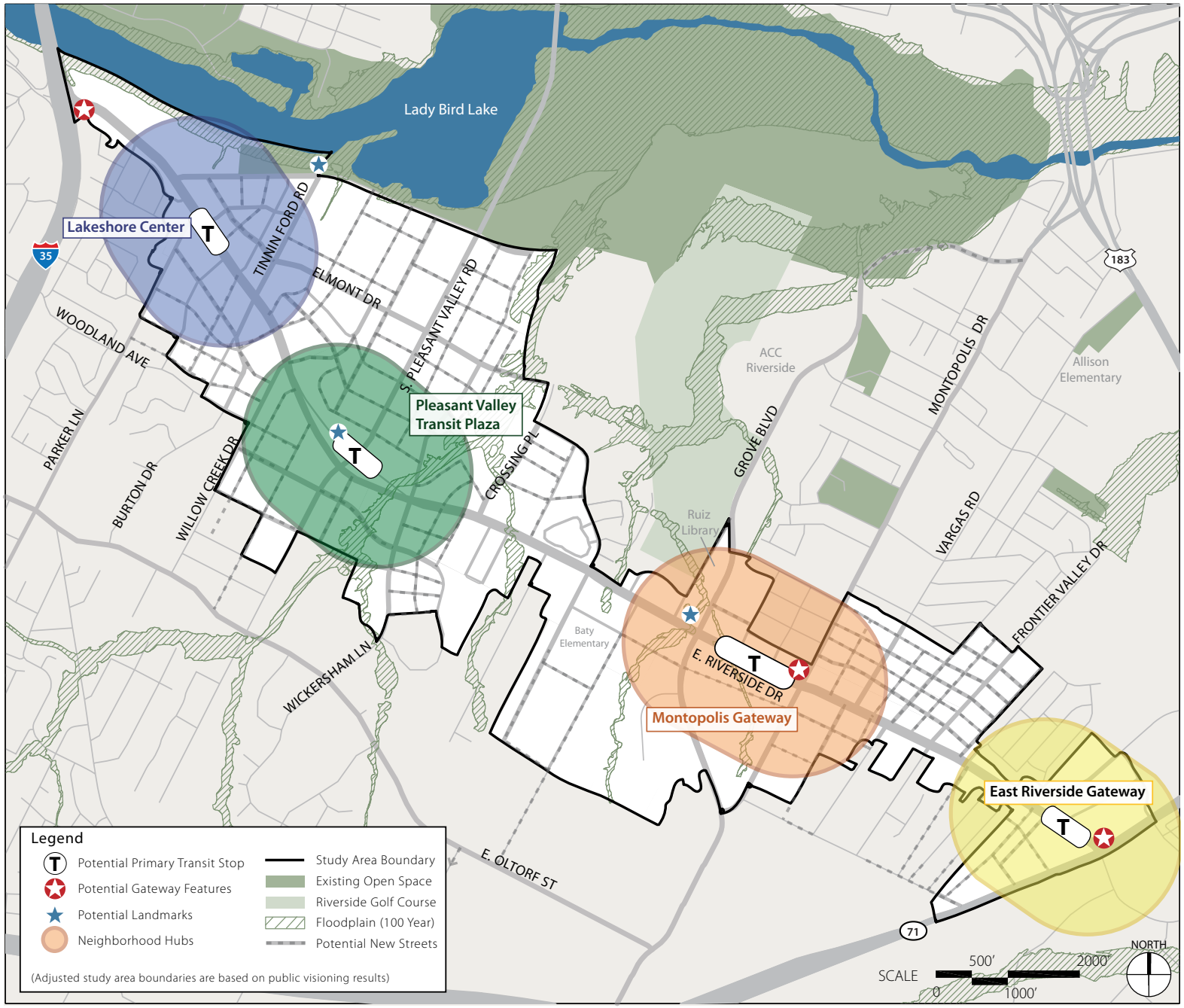


Exhibit 4.1:
Neighborhood Hubs Map

Note: Hubs represent an approximate 5 minute walk from the primary transit stop.

Development Hubs

One of the principal recommendations of this Plan is to focus future development into "Hubs" or centers along East Riverside Drive concentrated around proposed primary rail stops with dense commercial, residential and mixed uses. Through the visioning process, four distinctive Hubs were identified along the Corridor. The goal is to create a center that is active throughout the day, reduces auto dependence, and creates a unique sense of place within each Hub. The Hubs serve to break up the currently monotonous string of strip malls and surface parking into several distinct, indentifiable, pedestrian friendly neighborhood commercial centers along the Corridor. The oblong symbols on Exhibit 4.1 indicate the general area recommended for Hubs and also show the general location of the proposed primary transit stops. Although the Hub locations are shown conceptually as a 1/4 mile radius (5-minute walking distance) from proposed primary rail stops, the recommendations and Hub characteristics described in this Master Plan would only apply to properties within the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area boundaries.

From west to east the proposed Hubs are:

Lakeshore Center;

Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza;

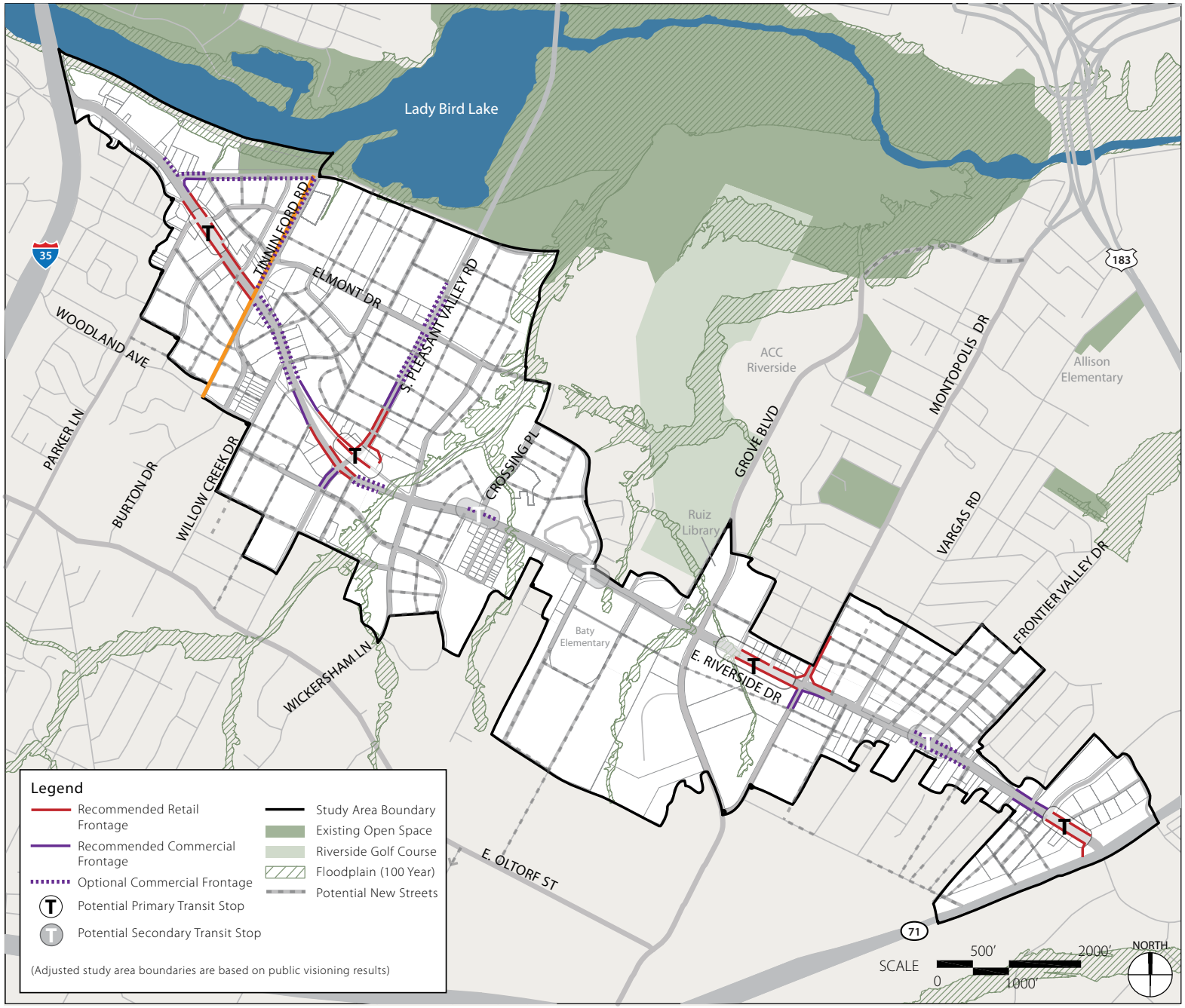
Montopolis Gateway; and

East Riverside Gateway.

The area within the Hubs is differentiated from the rest of the corridor by the concentration of higher density mixed use development with ground floor retail and commercial space, and residential units above, and their proximity to transit stations. The strategic location of ground floor commercial use, such as retail and office, is crucial to achieving the goals of increasing street activity, discouraging criminal behavior, and enhancing the pedestrian realm. Where these uses are recommended, as shown on Exhibit 4.2 Commercial Frontages Map, buildings should provide the ground floor commercial or retail uses and be built up to or near the sidewalk edge. Buildings should be designed to give the sense of an active use and provide interest for the pedestrian. This combination of uses cultivates a pedestrian and transit oriented environment, where residents, workers, or visitors can arrive by foot or via transit and be within a five to ten minute walk of retail and services.

The Hubs are the areas in the Corridor where it is suggested that new development should be focused and concentrated. Within the Hubs, a development bonus system is recommended to permit greater heights and/or densities if a public benefit is provided in exchange. Only properties that are within both the East Riverside Corridor planning area and in one of the four suggested Hubs are eligible for development bonuses. Focusing more dense development near primary transit stops enables a greater number of people to walk to transit, reducing the need and expense of a car. The following pages provide a brief description of the character envisioned for each Hub.

Exhibit 4.2:
Retail and Commercial Frontages Map

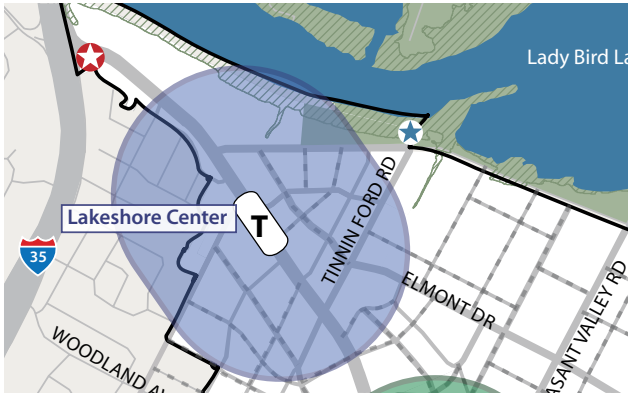


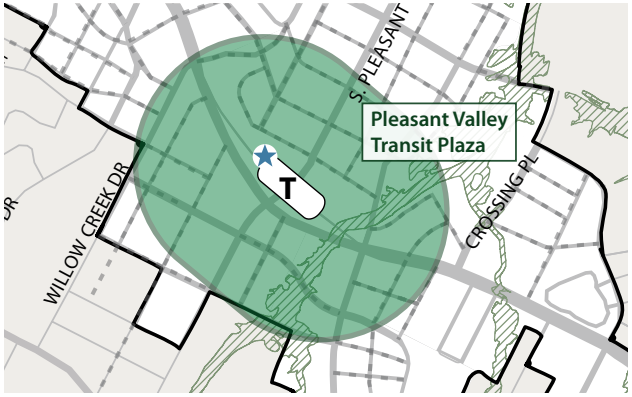
Character of the Hubs

LAKESHORE CENTER

The proposed Lakeshore Center Hub near Lakeshore Drive and East Riverside Drive, with its proximity to Lady Bird Lake and surrounding natural areas, provides a unique opportunity to mix nature with an urban center. The vision for the Lakeshore Center Hub is to create a green, sustainable, and livable mixed use area that benefits from and complements the area's proximity to existing open space around Lady Bird Lake and high quality transit along East Riverside Drive. This area is already experiencing new development, which can serve as a springboard for the Lakeshore Center Hub.

This Hub could be based on its identity as an access point to Lady Bird Lake and the associated park and trail system, and from a potential new Farmer's Market that would ideally be located across from the transit station. This area's proximity to Lady Bird Lake, downtown, and new developments that are in the planning or construction stages ensure that a potential transit stop would be well-used from opening day. In this area, East Riverside Drive will be a lively commercial street lined with mixed use buildings with retail storefronts on the ground floor. The pedestrian environment will provide a green connection from the transit stop to Lady Bird Lake. Commercial frontages could continue on Lakeshore Blvd., providing opportunity for sidewalk cafes and other ways to enjoy the lakefront views.





PLEASANT VALLEY TRANSIT PLAZA

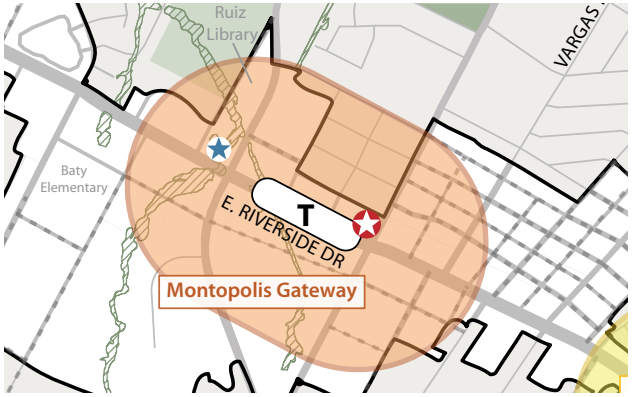
The Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza is envisioned as a major public amenity within the Corridor and is intended to create a distinct area within the planning area by combining unique plaza and open space elements with new buildings providing local and regional services and amenities.

The intention for the Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza is to create a destination for both residents and visitors to the Corridor. The central feature of the Hub is a paved transit plaza (illustrated in the adjacent rendering). Buildings surrounding the plaza could feature major retail and office uses, retaining large retailers existing in the area such as a grocery store, and providing areas for housing. The plaza area will be pedestrian-focused and draw pedestrian activity away from the nearby busy East Riverside Drive and Pleasant Valley Roads into a transit and pedestrian oriented space. A market in the plaza could provide an opportunity for small retailers to benefit from high levels of pedestrian traffic. The potential development of City-owned land in the existing median of the intersection could serve as a catalyst for redevelopment in the area and be a showcase for the type of transit-oriented development envisioned in this Master Plan, including community gathering spaces and housing affordable to a mix of income levels. Transforming this portion of East Riverside Drive into a pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial center will create a major focal point in the planning area.

MONTOPOLIS GATEWAY

Montopolis was originally settled as a separate community on the outskirts of Austin and is still a vibrant area with its own unique character. What is missing, however, is a neighborhood center that echoes that vibrancy. The goal of the Montopolis Gateway Hub is to capture the vitality of the Montopolis community, and to provide a commercial center for the residents of the Montopolis neighborhood, the employees of Tokyo Electron, and the students of the local ACC campus. This Hub will be a gateway to the Corridor from adjacent neighborhoods and Austin Community College Riverside Campus, as well as a connection to other civic amenities such as the Ruiz branch library, and the Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park and trails. The Hispanic presence in the area should be reflected in the character and uses in this hub to distinguish it from other hubs.

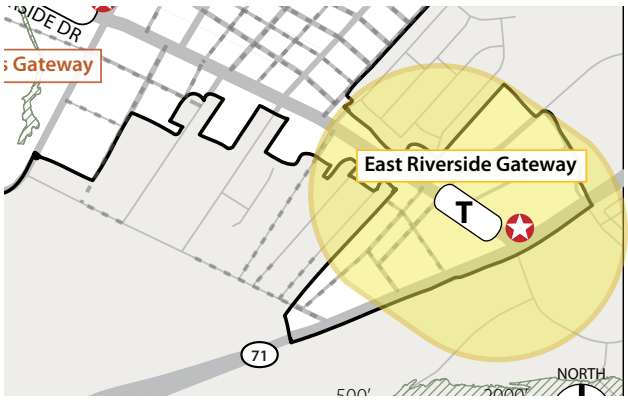
Gateway or landmark features at Montopolis Drive or Grove Boulevard are suggested to signify the entrance to the Montopolis neighborhood and the ACC Riverside Campus. Smaller scaled retail buildings are suggested along Montopolis Drive and East Riverside Drive to provide a commercial center for the area. As in other Hubs, a transit stop is suggested for this area so that residents, students, and workers have the option to use high quality transit. Improved streetscaping and the enhancement of existing open space will help to integrate nature with the built environment.



EAST RIVERSIDE GATEWAY

The intersection of Ben White Boulevard (SH 71) and East Riverside Drive is currently designed essentially as an intersection of highways with little accommodation for pedestrians. What it could be, however, is an active gateway area to the East Riverside Corridor with a busy transit hub, plaza, and commercial and retail uses. The recommendation for an improved treatment of this intersection and surrounding area includes a small plaza and open space. The placement of a landmark or gateway feature combined with the placement of mixed use buildings along East Riverside Drive will serve as a gateway to the East Riverside Corridor. The East Riverside Gateway should create an important first impression of the Corridor for travelers entering the area from the east.

Commercial and office uses are recommended on the ground floor of buildings in the Hub to provide activity at street level. This area could serve as a regional employment center for businesses that would benefit from good highway access, proximity to the airport and the future rail connection downtown. In addition, this Hub has the potential to serve as an important transportation center because of its proximity to SH 71 and the airport; a regional parking structure is therefore suggested for this Hub. Services supporting the transportation center could provide jobs and neighborhood amenities.



Proposed Land Use Districts

The Land Use District designations proposed in this Master Plan generally describe land uses, densities and building heights envisioned for different subareas within the Corridor. These recommendations establish a framework that will guide the creation of future development regulations for properties in the planning area. The Land Use Districts are based on the concept of defining Hubs or centers adjacent to major transit stops. Their placement was carefully considered to encourage the most logical and comprehensive design relating to the proposed rail line and to existing uses in close proximity to the planning area, with the goal of creating a more pedestrian-friendly area. The allowance of greater density and mixed use development near proposed primary transit stops along East Riverside Drive should help to alleviate pressure on single family areas by providing additional units to meet some of the demand created by Austin's increasing population. Compatibility standards regulating the height of buildings in close proximity to single family residences will apply, creating a transition between single family properties and other types of buildings. The districts do not indicate property rezonings but are intended to guide such decisions in the future. This Master Plan identifies recommended entitlements (building heights, density and floor-to-area ration (FAR)) for each land use district, as shown in Exhibit 4.4. These will form the framework for new zoning regulations to be created for the area following adoption of the plan. For the most part, these base entitlements are similar to existing zoning in the area, but would include improved urban design requirements to make the area more pedestrian-friendly.

Exhibit 4.3 illustrates the proposed Land Use Districts for the planning area. There are six district designations:

Corridor Mixed Use District

The Corridor Mixed Use District is centered on primary transit stops along East Riverside Drive. This land use district generally coincides with the central core of the Hubs. This is the highest density district designation within the Corridor and ideally will contain buildings with multiple uses. The ground floors of these buildings are envisioned to be primarily retail or office while upper floors may be office and /or residential. Single use buildings are not encouraged in this District. This District is not intended for detached single family home development due to its proximity to a transit stop.

Mixed use development is key in this district because it will improve walkability due to a variety of land uses located in a compact area. Residents can easily walk to a variety of services that otherwise would require a vehicle trip. When mixed use development is combined with accessible transit as is proposed in this Master Plan, dependence on personal vehicles can be greatly reduced. This district is envisioned to allow up to approximately 5 stories in height (60 feet), but properties within the hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses, which are further explained on the following pages.

Neighborhood Mixed Use District

The Neighborhood Mixed Use District generally occupies areas adjacent to a Corridor Mixed Use District, but this will depend also upon surrounding land uses outside the planning area. This District is intended to have opportunities for residential and smaller-scale commercial uses. Neighborhood retail, office and commercial uses may take the form of coffee shops, dry cleaners, convenience stores, small medical clinics, and other local services. Development in the Neighborhood Mixed Use District is less dense than that in the Corridor Mixed Use district but more dense than the predominantly residential districts described below. Residential units in this district should be townhouses, condos or multifamily dwellings. This District is not intended for detached single family home development due to its proximity to a transit stop. This district is envisioned to allow up to approximately 4 stories in height (50 feet), but properties within the hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses.

Urban Residential District

The Urban Residential District as proposed contains only residential development. Residential units in this district should be townhouses, condos or multifamily dwellings. This District is not intended for detached single family home development due to its proximity to a transit stop. The Urban Residential District is envisioned to allow approximately 3 or 4 stories in height (40 feet), but properties within the hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses.

Neighborhood Residential District

Like the Urban Residential District, the Neighborhood Residential District contains only residential development and is intended to provide a transition from existing single family neighborhoods to the more active, urban development of the core of East Riverside Drive. Residential units may be in the form of detached single family homes, duplexes, townhouses, and smaller scale multi-family buildings.

Areas that have been designated as Neighborhood Residential are generally located off of East Riverside Drive. A large Neighborhood Residential District has been proposed between Vargas Road and Frontier

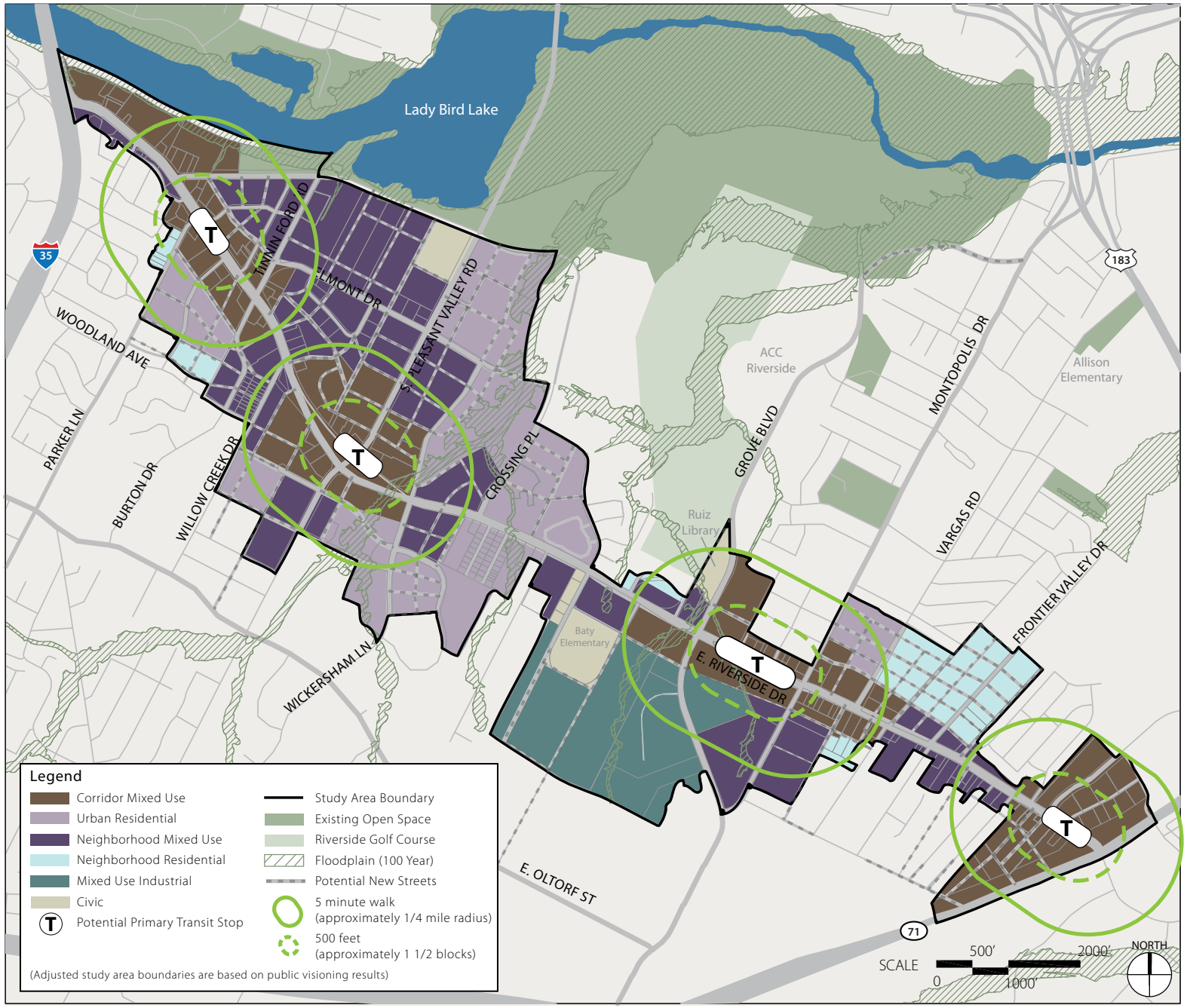


Exhibit 4.3:
Land Use Districts Map

Note: This Corridor Plan shall not constitute zoning regulation or establish zoning district boundaries.

Valley Drive to transition down to neighborhoods to the north of the planning area. Additional areas off of the main corridor of East Riverside Drive have also been designated as Neighborhood Residential Districts for this reason. The Neighborhood Residential District is envisioned to allow up to 3 stories in height (35 feet), and no height or density bonuses would be allowed.

Industrial Mixed Use District

The Industrial Mixed Use District is a land use district specifically tailored to the properties owned by Tokyo Electron and Austin Energy within the planning area. In recognition and support of existing industrial activity in the area, low impact industrial uses are envisioned with added options for retail, office, and attached multi-family residential development. Mixed use is encouraged in this district especially for the portion near East Riverside Drive. Redevelopment of the site could include additional uses integrated with existing development or an entirely new development scheme. This district would have a 60' maximum height limit, but areas within the Hubs surrounding primary transit stations could also have the potential for height and density bonuses.

Civic Spaces

Existing civic facilities in the planning area are identified by a civic designation on the Land Use Districts map. As the East Riverside Corridor area changes and more people make it a place to live, work, and visit, additional civic amenities and services will be necessary to serve the community. Civic facilities could potentially be located anywhere within the planning area and are not limited to the locations identified as Civic on the map. It is clear that additional schools, police, EMS, and fire resources and/or facilities will be needed in the future, but the exact locations for those facilities will be determined when the need arises based on the guidelines of each entity. Austin Independent School District (AISD) and Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) evaluate

Potential Neighborhood Street in Neighborhood Residential or Urban Residential Land Use DIstrict

Exhibit 4.4:
Land Use Districts Chart

	Land Use District	Corridor Mixed Use	Neighborhood Mixed Use	Urban Residential	Neighborhood Residential	Industrial Mixed Use
Building Height & Density	**Max Bldg. Height (feet)[1]**	60’	50’	40’	35’ (no height bonus allowed)	60’
	Max. Units/Acre[1]	55	45	36	17	45
	Max Floor-to-Area Ratio[1] (FAR)	2:1	1:1	0.75:1	TBD	2:1
Parking	**Min. Parking Standards**	60% of Appendix A[2] (standard City parking requirements), down to 50% with trip reduction programs				
	Max. Parking Standards	100% of Appendix A[2]				
	Shared Parking Counted	Yes, per current code				
Allowable Uses	**Residential, attached**	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
	Residential, detached	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed
	Smaller-scale Retail (less than 50,000 sq. ft.)	Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	General Retail	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Office	Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Warehousing & Light Manufacturing	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Education / Religion	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
	Hospitality (hotels/motels)	Allowed	Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed
	Civic Uses (public)	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed

1 In designated areas around future primary transit stops, a development bonus may be available for properties to exceed these limits by providing public benefits.
2 City of Austin Land Development Code Sec: 25-6 Appendix A (Tables of Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements).

Note: This Corridor Plan shall not constitute zoning regulation or establish zoning district boundaries.

their school needs on a regular basis and have a process through which they determine timelines and locations for new schools. See Appendix A for more information about existing schools serving elementary students living in the East Riverside Corridor area. As part of the visioning process, participants noted that crime was a significant issue in the area and that the redevelopment of blighted areas could be part of the solution to the crime problem. In addition to the potential addition of police facilities in the area, as commercial activity increases, there are more people watching that is happening on the streets, which can help reduce crime.

Exhibit 4.4 shows proposed land use, height and parking standards for each land district. These standards are intended to guide the development of future zoning regulations for the planning area.

Development Bonus Recommendations

The land use districts that form the land use vision for the plan, as described in the previous section, allow for a greater mix of uses and better urban design throughout the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area, but for the most part do not recommend increased allowable density by right around the transit hubs above the existing zoning entitlements. What is recommended for areas near the primary transit stops, however, is the potential for property owners or developers to participate in a development bonus program through which they could be allowed to build taller or more dense buildings in exchange for providing a specified amount of community benefits. This recommendation is based on discussions during the planning process in which a majority of the planning participants supported the idea of allowing additional density around primary transit stops in exchange for community benefits and to bring together more people, jobs, and services in close proximity to one another and to transit. This would allow more floor area or dwelling units per acre near primary transit stops to reduce walking distances and to have buildings designed in a way that makes it efficient, safe, and convenient to travel by modes other than the automobile, including by foot, bike, and transit.

This Master Plan recommends a number of improvements important to the community to achieve the overall vision of the plan. These include the provision of parks and open space, better circulation and connectivity, transit, improved bike and pedestrian paths, incorporation of sustainability measures in new development, ensuring a continued supply of affordable housing in the area, etc. As described further in the implementation chapter of this plan, the City has various mechanisms for achieving each of these elements, but very simply put, these elements will either be provided by the public sector (City or other agencies) or the private sector through development and redevelopment of privately-owned properties. The City requires private development to take on the responsibility for providing certain public improvements in a development project (e.g., the provision of sidewalks). However, this Master Plan envisions a level and quality of improvements beyond what is typically provided by the City or required of development citywide, and so it will require additional funding sources or mechanisms to implement the vision.

One way for the area to obtain enhanced community benefits such as more parks and open space, improved connectivity, affordable housing, among others, is through a development bonus program. A development bonus program is one in which a developer is able to build a larger building than is normally allowed in exchange for providing specified community benefits. In order to create an additional source of funding and an incentive to provide a higher level of community benefits in the area, it is recommended that a development bonus system be created. Typically, a development bonus program

is tied to clear public objectives, providing specific quantities of additional floor area above an established maximum, in return for prescribed community benefits. The development bonus approach assumes developers, if allowed to garner more revenue from a given site through greater entitlements, can provide additional benefit to the public. By providing incentives, it can induce developers to provide amenities that result in community–wide benefits, but whose cost is such that it would not otherwise be provided by the "market".

Community Benefits to be Provided in Exchange for Development Bonus

Through questionnaires given during the public planning process, several community benefits have been identified as important for the area and potentially appropriate for inclusion as part of a development bonus program: additional parks and open space (above base requirements), improved landscaping and streetscapes (above base requirements), improved bicycling facilities and cyclist changing/shower rooms, and green building. In addition, stakeholders have identified other potential community benefits for development bonuses, including the preservation and creation of affordable housing, providing homeownership opportunities, providing office uses to create employment centers, retention of small businesses, and possibly the provision of transit facilities as a way of having the private sector provide support for the urban rail project.

The community benefit exchanges for additional height or density will be defined in the Regulating Plan, developed with public input. Development bonuses can be structured to produce desired on-site amenities or features (e.g., parks and plazas, create of new affordable housing units, etc.) and/or to generate revenues for specific community programs (e.g. affordable housing preservation).

Density bonuses can also be tailored to prioritize some community benefits over others. For example, some community benefits may be a requirement for anyone seeking a development bonus, while others may be presented as options from which a developer may choose to complete the package of benefits to be provided in exchange for additional entitlements. While this Master Plan generally identifies the types of community benefits that may be required in exchange for additional entitlements, it does not specify priority. The selection of eligible community benefits, the specific exchanges, and the level of developer flexibility versus strict requirements will occur through a public process following adoption of the plan.

The development bonus program recommended in this plan would allow for an increase in height and density around the primary stations, but the ability of a property owner or developer to participate in the program, and the extent of additional height or density granted, would be dependent upon the community benefits provided by the party seeking the bonus. The specific requirements for provision of community benefits that would need to be provided in order to receive additional entitlements will be established with public input following adoption of this Master Plan, during the creation of the Regulating Plan. It will not be a negotiated exchange, but rather a set ratio between the community benefits that must be provided in exchange for a specified increase in building floor area or height.

Creation of Development Bonus Regulations

After adoption of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, City staff will begin work on a draft Regulating Plan to implement the land use and urban design recommendations of the plan through regulation changes. The Regulating Plan will be based on the concepts described in the Master Plan and will establish new zoning and urban design standards for properties in the area as well as development bonus program provisions. The Regulating Plan will be developed through a public input process that will include community meetings. The Regulating Plan, including the development bonus program, will be presented to the public for review and comment and will require public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption. It is estimated that the creation of the Regulating Plan and development bonus system would take approximately one year.

The development bonus program will be based on the Master Plan but will also include a more detailed analysis to determine the specific properties or locations eligible for development bonuses and to define the specific requirements for community benefits granted in exchange for increased density and/or height.

One goal of creating a development bonus system is to establish a transparent and understandable system for awarding additional density, above that which is allowed by established zoning, in exchange for the provision of community benefits. The development bonus program created with public input will balance the trade-offs and be codified so that the exchange does not have to be negotiated for every property.

Development bonuses are effective when they result in clear benefits to both the property developer and the community. The property owner and developer benefit by additional land value and net project revenues, and the community benefits by a project that includes valued public amenities on-site or that contributes monetarily to specific programs that are difficult to provide on-site.

For a development bonus program to work effectively, however, bonuses need to be calibrated so that the additional entitlements granted produce sufficient incremental value for private developers, over and above any community benefits charged, to incentivize the additional development in light of increased risk and cost. As such, the definition of the community benefit exchanges that would be required in trade for increased entitlements will need to take into consideration the ultimate height and density a developer would be allowed to build. Without such calibration, developers will have little incentive to utilize the development bonus, and the East Riverside Corridor could lose an opportunity to achieve community benefits that may otherwise be difficult to fund.

This Master Plan makes recommendations for the types of community benefits that should be provided in exchange for a development bonus (described above), but the exact amount and specific requirements of the community benefits to be provided will be determined with public input following adoption of the plan. What the developer would need to provide in additional community benefits and the amount of additional development entitlements he/she would receive would be clearly defined – it would not be negotiated as each property redevelops, or on a case by case basis. An example of such an exchange could be: for each square foot of publicly-accessible open space provided on-site (above base requirements), a property owner or developer would be granted 20 square feet of building space above what is allowed by the base zoning for that property. This exchange needs to be carefully calibrated so that the increased building space provides sufficient value to cover the costs of the community benefit, as well as provide some incremental value to the developer, in order to make the development bonus program be successful. The exchanges may need to be re-calibrated over time as property values change. This defined exchange creates predictability for both the citizens seeking assurances that community benefits would be provided and property owners/developers who need to estimate the full costs of a proposed development.

While this Master Plan does not set maximum heights that could be achieved through a development bonus system, a developer's/property owner's ability to achieve the maximum heights that will be set during development of the Regulating Plan would be determined by the extent to which community benefits are provided, as proscribed in the Regulating Plan. The development bonus should be scalable - if a property owner only wanted a little additional height or density above their existing base entitlements (based on the land use districts described in the previous section), then they would contribute some additional community benefits, but if they wanted more height or density, they would have to provide more community benefits, as will be clearly defined in the Regulating Plan. If a property owner did not want additional height or density entitlements above what is allowed, then they would not be obliged to provide benefits to the community above and beyond what is typically required of development in the area.

Development Bonus Areas

Development bonus areas are generally recommended for properties within a 5-minute walking distance to a primary transit stop (approximately ¼ mile radius from the rail stop). It is recommended that only properties located within both the East Riverside Corridor planning area boundaries and within the Hubs would be eligible to participate in the development bonus program (see Exhibit 4.1) In addition, in order to reduce the potential incentive to redevelop existing multi-family properties that currently provide affordable market-rate housing, policy-makers could decide that only properties without

existing residential developments would be eligible for development bonuses. The intent behind these proposed development bonus areas is to allow for higher density development immediately adjacent to the primary rail stops, allowing those who want to take advantage of transit to live or work in easy walking distance to the rail stop. The bonus areas are conceptually identified as part of this Master Plan. The exact properties that would be eligible for a development bonus would be determined during the development of the Regulating Plan and development bonus program, following adoption of the Master Plan.

Development bonuses would not be allowed in the Neighborhood Residential District which is intended to provide a transition from existing single-family neighborhoods. Compatibility standards that regulate allowable building heights near single family homes would apply, further ensuring a transition from single family homes to taller buildings.

Development entitlements that could be allowed in exchange for the provision of community benefits

Within the Hubs, it is recommended that the greatest bonus heights and densities be allowed closest to the primary rail stops. The maximum height allowed with a bonus would then decrease with distance from the rail stops and in land use districts with lower base height limits. However, this Master Plan does not set maximum building heights that could be achieved through a development bonus. The maximum allowable bonus height and/or density will be determined during development of the density bonus program following adoption of this plan.

During the planning process participants indicated support for the idea that higher concentrated infill or redevelopment should occur in a series of "development nodes" around the primary transit stops to focus more dense retail, office and residential uses in those areas. However, there was no consensus on the extent to which higher density should be allowed near primary transit stops in exchange for additional community benefits. In the public visioning process, photos of buildings in the 2 to 5 story range generally received the highest ratings. Based on this feedback during the planning process, this plan recommends the baseline land use districts have height limits to allow buildings to be a maximum of 3 to 5 stories, which is similar to existing zoning, and only allow additional height near the primary transit stops through a development bonus if developers/property owners provide additional community benefits that would contribute to the vision as described in this Corridor Plan.

Because the existing entitlements for properties on East Riverside Drive generally allow 60-feet in height, in order to achieve additional community benefits, developers must be given the opportunity to achieve entitlements greater than their existing entitlements. In addition, in order for a development bonus program to work effectively, the bonuses need to provide enough additional entitlements in comparison to the community benefits that would be required in exchange, to make participating in the development bonus program worthwhile. It must be understood that the ability to develop with increased or bonused height or density does not always generate increased or "incremental value" to a developer sufficient to incentivize the additional development, due to construction costs or other factors. On the other hand, opportunities for higher base revenues and certain construction related economies of scale are available, so there are cases where sufficient incremental value is created to justify a charge for a development bonus. One such case is in taller residential development, where the value of units increases with additional height.

Information about potential height bonus areas is provided below and will guide the creation of the development bonus program for the area:

Potential Height Bonus Areas

It is important to note that the height limits envisioned for the Land Use Districts discussed in the previous section will serve as the base heights for the Height Bonus Areas. Any property within the East Riverside Corridor planning area that is not within one of the Development Bonus Areas is intended to follow the height limitations described in the Land Use Districts.

Height Bonus Area 1 – The area within approximately one to two blocks of the primary transit stops is critical for new development to create mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places near transit. This area has a high level of transit integration, including streetscapes that connect the stop with the surrounding buildings, and buildings that are oriented toward the stop. For this reason, the area within one to two blocks of the primary transit stops should be considered during development of the Regulating Plan to allow greatest heights and densities to create incentives for redevelopment as well as provide community benefits. Mixed use buildings are ideal in this area, as they should provide ground floor pedestrian-oriented uses and employment or residential uses in the upper floors. This area is intended for the highest building heights and greatest density within the Corridor to support transit and to enable greater numbers of people to live near transit, and is located within the Corridor Mixed Use land use district.

Height Bonus Area 2 –This area would include land between height bonus area 1 and one-quarter mile of the primary transit stops. Allowing for additional development entitlement above base regulations is recommended in this area as there is much potential to benefit from proximity to transit and other services.

Pedestrians' easy access to a variety of uses and development potential are both greatest within one-quarter mile of a station, which is approximately a 5-minute walk.

Building Stepbacks

In order to lessen the visual impact of tall buildings on the pedestrian realm and to retain a human scale for the streetscape, the building façade on taller buildings should be stepped back from the street above the third story. This creates a building base of no more than three stories along the street and wider view corridors above the third floor than would exist with current zoning. The building stepback would be required whether or not the building is eligible for or using a height bonus. The streetwall created by a three (3) story building base is the most important visual element of the pedestrian realm, as the lower stories of buildings are what pedestrians generally notice as they walk down streets. A three story building base for all buildings four stories and taller creates a low-scale visual presence along sidewalks, while also allowing for increased height in important areas, such as near primary rail stops.

Other Potential Development Bonus Options

In addition to height bonuses, other potential bonus options could be offered in exchange for community benefits, including density bonuses that would allow increased Floor Area Ratios (FAR) and an increased number of dwelling units per acre. The specifics will be determined during development of the Regulating Plan and development bonus program following adoption of the plan.

SECTION 5

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION
OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS
SUSTAINABILITY
PARKING

Introduction

The quality and character of buildings, their relationship to sidewalks, streets and public spaces, and provisions for pedestrian comfort such as wide shaded sidewalks all significantly contribute to the character and feel of a place. The location, design and treatment of parking also plays a significant role in shaping our perception and experience of an area. This section provides urban design guidelines that will help to create an environment that is of high quality and is pedestrian-friendly. The guidelines should apply to all buildings and parking within the East Riverside Corridor planning area boundaries. These recommendations should be combined with the land use and height recommendations set forth in Section 4 – Land Use and Density - and used as the basis for the City of Austin to develop a Regulating Plan (zoning and urban design standards) that would be applied to all properties in the East Riverside Corridor planning area.

The City of Austin's Design Commission Urban Design Guidelines, that are recommendations for the higher density areas throughout the city, have informed many of the guidelines in this section. Throughout this section, photos are used to illustrate the recommendations, as well as the visual and spatial characteristics that are envisioned for the planning area.

Overall Design Recommendations

Build to the Street

Buildings give shape and form to the space around our city streets. They provide interest, activity, a sense of safety through "eyes on the street" and protection for pedestrians from harsh weather. In contrast a street fronted by surface parking lots, cars, and tall fences can be unwelcoming and uncomfortable for pedestrians. The pedestrian can feel isolated, out of place and unwelcome due to the lack of activity and inhospitable environment. A street that is fairly consistently lined with buildings at the street edge signifies a place for people and invites pedestrian activity. A street that is lined with surface parking lots signifies a place for cars and can discourage pedestrian activity.

In commercial, mixed use, and multi-family areas along East Riverside Drive and other major roadways in the planning area, buildings should be built to the street and parking should be to the rear or side of buildings to create the most conducive environment possible for pedestrian activity.

Establish Building Height Stepbacks from the Street

Buildings taller than three stories should have a building stepback above the third floor in order to maintain human scale at the level of the pedestrian and to create wider areas for views above the third floor. Stepbacks enhance the pedestrian experience at the ground level as well as diminish the visual impact of a building as it becomes more vertical. The recommended minimum depth of front building stepbacks is 10 feet.

Provide Wide Sidewalks and an Improved Streetscape

Wide sidewalks provide the room necessary to accommodate amenities such as street trees, bollards, street furniture, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and shade that make pedestrians feel safe and comfortable when walking. In general, wider sidewalks should be adjacent to wider roadways. Sidewalk width (including areas for street trees, landscaping and street furniture) should be at least 15 feet wide for arterial roadways and commercial areas, and at least 12 feet wide for more local streets to accommodate projected pedestrian flow.

The City of Austin has several approaches to creating a high quality streetscape network and pedestrian environment. The Design Standards and Vertical Mixed Use Subchapter of the Land Development Code stresses the importance of a high quality streetscape and the Downtown Great Streets Master Plan defines specific streetscape standards for downtown. Both documents should be considered when developing streetscape regulations for the East Riverside Corridor.

Provide Shade and Comfort for the Pedestrian at the Street Level

Austin has many months of hot and humid weather and can also have cold and wet winters. These climatic conditions can discourage pedestrian activity especially during the summer. The comfort of the pedestrian is crucial to pedestrian activity and the viability of any mixed use, higher density development.

Overhead cover, offering adequate pedestrian protection from the sun and rain should be provided along the right-of-way where buildings meet the street or on internal roadways. Cover may take the form of either a projection from the building, an arcade, or a combination of the two. There are multiple recommended sidewalk coverings including but not limited to: retractable canvas awnings, fixed awnings, pergolas, and arcades.

Street trees are another important element that increases pedestrian comfort. Existing citywide design standards (Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use) specifies street tree requirements for Core Transit Corridors and Internal Circulation Routes. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan should carry these standards forward and encourage installation of street trees along all other streets and pedestrian corridors.

Provide Generous Street Level Windows and Doors

Blank or featureless walls prohibit a visual connection between the inside of the building and the sidewalk. People inside cannot see those on the street and people on the street cannot see inside the building. This can contribute to the sense that the area is unpopulated

and possibly unsafe. This lack of visual connection and feeling of inactivity can provide yet another disincentive for pedestrians. Windows and doors not only create a feeling of connection and activity, they also instill in people on the street the feeling they could be assisted if in danger. This can increase comfort and safety and help reduce crime by increasing the potential that offenders would be seen.

- The lower two levels of buildings, where they face the street or internal roadways, should be made highly transparent, through the use of windows, doors or fixed glass panels.

- A minimum area of glass, meeting the most restrictive percentage described in the Design Standards, Subchapter E should be required for the first two floors of the building.

- The use of reflective or highly tinted glass is discouraged.

Accentuate Primary Building Entrances

Buildings or individual uses within a building should place their primary entrance facing the principle street frontage or plaza/park frontage, with additional secondary entrances permitted. Primary entrances should be clearly identifiable as the main entry to the building and should include design elements that highlight the entry point to the building.

Façade Articulation

Breaking down a large building facade into smaller components is referred to as façade articulation. Façade articulation is recommended in order to create a more human-scaled building and to provide a visually interesting streetwall.

This can be acheived by changes in material, colors, window and door treatment, masonry pattern, and cornice treatments. Common elements that can enhance the expression of different building segments in residential buildings include: projected window bays, stoops, balconies, patios, and portico treatments. These elements help larger buildings achieve a more human-scaled appearance. For buildings in the East Riverside Corridor area, façade articulation is recommended for any building façade 60 feet or longer facing a street, park or plaza.

Create Active Outdoor Space and Engage Open Space Amenities

Buildings should incorporate outdoor spaces such as balconies, patios, courtyards or similar areas to provide additional open space and amenities, and to activate and provide architectural interest. Developments that border Lady Bird Lake, public parks or trails should be designed to provide connections to and engage those amenities. This could include design elements such as providing multi-modal access to the open space, having pedestrian oriented uses with windows and doors facing the amenity, and providing visual continuity between public and private spaces.

New Buildings should respect the Scale and Character of Neighborhood Edges

Existing neighborhoods contribute to the overall vitality and quality of the city. They are an important part of the community in the East Riverside corridor. Where proposed areas of greater density are in close proximity

to existing neighborhoods, special care should be taken in the design and location of new buildings, parking and vehicular access.

The height, setback, scale, massing and detailing of adjacent commercial, residential or mixed use buildings should respond to existing homes in the following ways:

- Building heights should not be out of scale with adjacent single-family residential and should include setbacks and stepbacks to transition from lower to higher buildings/structures.

- Open spaces can be used as a buffer and to link residential neighborhoods to commercial development through expanded streetscapes, linear greenways, or neighborhood parks and plazas or on-site open space at their interface.

Screen Mechanical and Utility Equipment

Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use specifies standards for screening of mechanical and utility equipment. These standards should be incorporated into the Regulating Plan for the East Riverside Corridor.

Incorporate Signage that Enhances the Pedestrian Character of the Corridor

Signage can have a significant positive or negative impact on the visual character of an area. When large, overpowering signs become the focus of an area the impact can be negative, diminishing the visual quality and public nature of the area. Parts of the East Riverside Corridor have these characteristics at present. When signage is human-scaled and complements the architectural design and character of the buildings, streets and uses it serves, the impact can be positive. Parts of South Congress Ave. and Downtown have these characteristics.

The following recommendations are provided for the design and size of signage in the East Riverside Corridor:

- The number and prominence of billboards in the Corridor should be reduced as permitted by City standards over time, until, ideally, billboards no longer exist.

- Develop and institute sign standards to control commercial signage characteristics including appropriate size, shape, height, color and lighting designed for a pedestrian scale, rather than an automobile scale;

- Limit commercial signage in the Hub areas to include: signs mounted on building fronts, small hanging signage, awning signage, window signage, and signage mounted on transoms;

- Enforce code violations to ensure conformity to design standards and maintenance;

- Develop way-finding signage throughout the Corridor to maintain consistency and clarity. Way-finding signage should be distinctive, highly visible and easy-to-read;

- Gateway signage should be located at gateway entrances to the Corridor.

Lighting

Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use specifies standards for lighting. These standards should be carried forward when developing the Regulating Plan for the East Riverside Corridor.

Create Landmark Buildings in Prominent Locations

Exhibit 4.1 identifies desired locations for landmarks throughout the planning area. Landmark buildings can provide architectural interest and focus, creating memorable places in a neighborhood. Landmark

buildings can provide focal points for both pedestrians and drivers within the neighborhood. Buildings which are major architectural landmarks should have additional height or architectural embellishments that distinguish the building from surrounding buildings. Such expression should include but not be limited to projections, towers, roof forms, height increases, or other architectural features.

Sustainability

Designing with the environment in mind was an objective reiterated throughout the East Riverside Corridor planning process. New development and redevelopment within this Corridor should strive to become one of the "greenest" in the City, establishing a new standard for future development in other parts of Austin. To accomplish such lofty goals, several green building and sustainable development recommendations are provided for the East Riverside Corridor.

Sustainability Recommendations:

Create an incentive program for Green Building and LEED
An incentive system should be developed to encourage green building as part of a development bonus program. All buildings should strive to meet either 1) Austin's Green Building Program, or 2) be LEED Certified as defined by the US Green Building Council or another nationally recognized green building certification system. A development bonus program could include the inclusion of sustainable building design and practices as a potential way for developers to be granted additional height or density for a project.

Provide property owners with information to encourage green practices in private development
Buildings in the Corridor should be designed to maximize energy performance. Property owners should be offered information and provided an opportunity to learn about sustainability, and be given information about the City of Austin Green Building program, and any rebates or incentives for which they might qualify.

Consider the potential for alternative energy sources in all projects
Consideration should be made for assessing projects for energy saving devices and non-polluting and renewable energy strategies. All buildings, new and existing, and public projects, should be encouraged to install alternative energy generators, such as solar panels, small scale windmills, etc.

Material recycling and reuse should be encouraged and accommodated in project designs
The use of reusable and recycled materials in construction creates development that is pro-active in terms of sustainability. In addition, buildings in the planning area should coordinate the size and functionality of refuse areas with the anticipated recycling collection services for glass, plastic, office paper, newspaper, cardboard, and organic wastes to maximize the effectiveness of the dedicated areas. Projects should be designed to adhere to the City's Zero Waste Guidelines.

Additional sustainable practices can be found in the infrastructure section of the plan, Section 6, and on Austin Energy's Green Building web page.

Landmark Building

Parking

At present, there is an abundance of surface parking lots in the East Riverside Corridor area that are under-utilized and contribute to an auto-dominated environment that discourages and inhibits pedestrian activity. Future redevelopment that is less auto-dependent can create value in these undervalued areas, enhance the livability of the area and provide adequate and attractive parking for new uses. It is important to get the parking right to improve the pedestrian environment, encourage alternate forms of transportation such as walking, biking or transit-use, but provide enough auto parking to ensure economic viability of the development.

Parking Recommendations:

Reduce Parking Requirements

Residents and employees who live and work in more compact mixed use areas with access to transit can reduce their need for a car. Excessive parking requirements add significantly to a project's cost and thus can act as a deterrent to redevelopment. To change this pattern, minimum parking requirements for the East Riverside Corridor should be reduced and maximum parking limits should be established.

Future standards for off-street parking in the Corridor should follow the parking standards of Austin's Transit-Oriented Development districts, which are:

- Minimum parking requirement: 60% of the requirements in Appendix A, Tables of Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements in the Austin Land Development Code (LDC) Section 25-6, unless other conditions are met to reduce the minimum to 50% of what is currently required.
- Maximum parking limit: 100% of the requirements in Appendix A, Tables of Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements in LDC Section 25-6.

Further reductions in both the allowed and maximum parking requirements should be considered over time as the transit system grows and the area becomes the multi-modal activity center envisioned in this plan.

Require Better Parking Design

The placement and treatment of parking greatly influences an area's appearance and walkability. Large surface parking lots in front of buildings create an unattractive and unappealing pedestrian environment and lengthen the distance one must walk from the sidewalk and transit to the building. As properties in the East Riverside Corridor develop or redevelop, parking should incorporate the following design guidelines:

- New parking lots should be prohibited in front of buildings. Parking should be structured or surface parking should be behind buildings and/or not visible from primary streets.
- Substantial screening should be provided for off-street surface parking that is visible from the street.
- New buildings should include embedded or wrapped structured parking where possible.
- Where exposed to public view parking structures should have façades that screen the view of cars, break down the façade into smaller increments, place ramps internal to the structure, and have usable retail or service uses on the 1st floor lining all public rights of way and/or parks and plazas.

Over time, the existing surface parking lots should be replaced with structured parking and additional buildings. Properties to the north of Riverside Drive and west of Pleasant Valley have a great opportunity to utilize

the existing slope to provide underground parking and enable buildings to front onto the sidewalk on Riverside. This change would significantly improve the urban design character of the area.

Provide On-Street Short-term Parking

On-street parallel parking should be provided where possible on all streets in the planning area to allow for short-term, high-turnover parking. On-street parking spaces should not be attached to any specific use or fulfill any specific parking requirement, but should instead be used for guest and short term retail and office parking. In commercial areas, on-street parking should be priced and metered at market rates. The revenues could be used to fund streetscape improvements and maintenance within the East Riverside Corridor area.

Continue to Allow and Encourage Shared Parking and Community Parking Facilities

Shared parking is parking which is available to more than one building or land use. In general, different types of land uses may create different demand for parking throughout the day. For example, restaurants may require more parking in evenings while office buildings need parking during the day.

Shared parking should be encouraged within the planning area in order to promote more efficient use of parking facilities. Shared parking arrangements in which a dedicated parking space may count towards the parking requirement of two or more uses are currently allowed by city code upon submission of a parking plan by the developer demonstrating that such an alternative parking arrangement is appropriate.

Structured parking is more expensive to build, especially for smaller properties. As redevelopment occurs and replaces the excess surface parking in the area, private development may provide additional parking to be used as shared community parking facilities.This would likely take place if or when there is an unfulfilled demand for parking in the area.

In order to better manage parking city-wide, the City has recently established a parking enterprise which has the ability to issue bonds to build and manage parking. The City could build and manage parking facilities in the area by charging market rates (for contract parking and hourly parking) to pay for the parking facilities over a number years. If a rail line is built along East Riverside Drive, shared community parking facilities should be evaluated for potential inclusion as part of the rail project. A shared parking facility to serve a transit line is recommended near the E. Riverside Dr./SH 71 intersection. Funding for this facility should be investigated as part of the rail initiative.

SECTION 6

INFRASTRUCTURE

WATER & WASTEWATER
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT/
WATER QUALITY
WATER CONSERVATION
ELECTRIC & NATURAL GAS

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Analysis

The ANA Consultant Team worked with the Austin Water Utility (AWU) to use computer analysis to model the effect on the water and wastewater distribution systems of future development that could result from the changes in the Corridor area as outlined in this plan. The models provided insight into upgrades necessary to water and wastewater mains and the related infrastructure needed to accommodate future development along the Corridor. The modeling was based on the proposed Corridor maximum build-out and a very conservative estimate of water and wastewater demand was used (conservative in this context means greater water and wastewater demand was assumed).

Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Recommendations:

Upgrade water infrastructure in coordination with the rail project and as redevelopment occurs

AWU has indicated that a series of water infrastructure system upgrades would need to be made over the next 20 years or more in this area due to a number of factors:

1. The age of the existing water system infrastructure serving the Corridor ranges from 40 to 60 years and is nearing the end of its projected useful life. In addition, commercial fire flow requirements have increased and now are often considered the controlling factor for determining the need for new water system upgrades to serve any new development with a commercial land use component.

2. The existing water distribution system and supporting infrastructure serving the East Riverside Corridor area is capable of supporting some additional development, however, additional water distribution system improvements would be required to adequately serve and support the maximum build out that could occur based on the land use and development concepts in this plan. Based on the results of the hydraulic water model, it is anticipated that an additional 36-inch transmission line would be needed along the entire length of East Riverside Drive (assuming the existing 24-inch remains in service), if the area were to develop to its maximum capacity envisioned in this plan. Also, for ultimate build-out additional 16 and 24-inch water system improvements would be required to distribute water north and south of Riverside Drive.

3. Many of the existing water distribution mains serving the Riverside Drive Corridor currently are located under the driving lanes of the roadway and may conflict with the proposed light rail/street car system and roadway improvements. Portions of the existing 24-inch water main along East Riverside Drive will likely need to be relocated to accommodate the roadway and rail improvements. The exact extent of these water system improvements will be determined as the Corridor redevelops and the route for the rail line is established.

4. Due to the age of the infrastructure and to satisfy AWU's maximum daily demand plus fire flow requirements, all pipes 6 inches and smaller will need to be retired and replaced with new water mains. This new pipe network will need to be 12 and 16-inch distribution lines to satisfy the demand loads.

5. The water mains running under Riverside Drive also serve development to the east and could require upsizing in the future to accommodate growth outside the Corridor Plan boundaries.

The City of Austin has a program to partner with private developers to install larger water mains and infrastructure than what is immediately required for the specific development being proposed to serve future additional adjacent development areas. This is a means to provide additional water distribution capacity to the Riverside Corridor and adjacent areas as new development occurs.

Austin Water Utility's future long range plans for the Corridor area include a proposed new water treatment plant (approximately 2040 timeframe) which would serve the area and a large transmission main network to connect the existing 60-inch transmission main in Pleasant Valley to Pilot Knob Reservoir (no timeframe or alignment has been determined). These two major projects may require adjustment to the sizes currently modeled and proposed in this study, but could also act as a means for providing additional water to the East Riverside Corridor.

The analysis conducted as part of this study can be used as a tool for Austin Water Utility's Systems Planning group, in conjunction with analysis of current development, future rail plans, changes to fire flow requirements, and changes to development conditions outside of the planning area to determine the need for system upgrades over time and to appropriately budget for Capital Improvement Projects.

Upgrade wastewater infrastructure in coordination with the rail project and as redevelopment occurs

The existing wastewater infrastructure serving the East Riverside Corridor is presently at capacity and is of concern to the City of Austin. However, the City is implementing a pending Capital Improvements Program (CIP) project (Downtown Wastewater Tunnel) for the construction of

new wastewater lines that will divert some wastewater that currently flows through the Riverside Drive Corridor wastewater collection system, thus making available additional wastewater capacity to better meet the needs of potential Riverside Corridor redevelopment. Based on the results of the hydraulic wastewater model, some sections of the Carson Creek Interceptor will need to be replaced with 18, 24, and 30-inch lines. Also, a number of new 12 to 15-inch wastewater lines would be required throughout the planning area to accommodate the wastewater demands of the future development that could occur in the Riverside Corridor.

In addition, the existing wastewater infrastructure located in the Riverside Drive Corridor is old (installed in the 1950's and 60's) and is in need of replacement in some locations. AWU reports that wet weather flows through the wastewater collection system are four (4) times those of average daily dry weather flows due to infiltration and inflow (I/I) in the aging wastewater collection lines, manholes, and services.

Also, as reported above for the water infrastructure, much of the existing wastewater collection system serving the Riverside Drive Corridor is currently located under the driving lanes of the roadway and may conflict with the proposed light rail/street car system and roadway improvements. Combined with the age of the system and the inflow/infiltration issues, much of the sanitary sewer system will need to be replaced or relocated throughout the Riverside Drive Corridor. The exact extent of these wastewater system improvements will be determined as the Corridor develops and if a light rail/streetcar line is built.

Due to the age of the existing wastewater infrastructure, the City should work with developers in the planning phases of private development approval to reimburse a portion of the upsizing or replacing the existing sewer mains to serve adjacent development areas. Upgrading the sanitary sewer network to reduce the current infiltration problems from the older wastewater mains serving the Corridor area would act to reduce the amount of inflow and infiltration and reduce the wet weather flows in the system. Austin Water Utility systems planning group can use the analysis conducted as part of this plan to anticipate the potential changes from the historical development pattern in the area and be prepared to look for opportunities to work with private developers to upsize the infrastructure or to appropriately budget for future Capital Improvement Projects.

Stormwater Management/ Water Quality

A majority of the existing development in the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area was constructed prior to the City of Austin's current stormwater management and stormwater quality regulations. As a result, there are some localized flooding and erosion problems within the East Riverside Drive Corridor. The older developments in the Corridor were built with few or no stormwater detention and stormwater quality treatment facilities on site.

All proposed new development and redevelopment in the area will be required to meet the City's current water quality and detention standards, as prescribed by the City of Austin Land Development Code (LDC), the Environmental Criteria Manual (ECM) and the Drainage Criteria Manual (DCM). These stormwater facilities can also serve the community by providing additional landscape and open space. Shared or regional stormwater treatment facilities, where feasible, are encouraged to be developed within the Corridor to create a more sustainable development pattern. Stormwater facilities and the conveyance of stormwater can include wet ponds, detention ponds, biofiltration ponds, vegetative swales, xeriscaping, bioswales, rain gardens, re-irrigation ponds, rain water harvesting and sedimentation/filtration ponds. The use of stormwater controls within the landscape is the preferred method of water quality treatment.

The Riverside Drive Corridor Master Plan includes proposals for additional streets, roadways, buildings, and other impervious structures, but also recommends additional greenspace. The stormwater conveyance (storm drain) system that currently exists within the Corridor is undersized or non-existent. Consequently, significant upgrades will be required to serve the proposed street grid system and address some localized flooding problems that currently exist in the Corridor.

Stormwater Management Recommendations:

Evaluate overall drainage system condition and capacity and establish short term and long term priorities

Consistent with the process outlined in the City's Watershed Protection Master Plan to identify and prioritize watershed problems, the City should identify short term strategic improvements to storm drains, facilities and inlet construction, as well as long term improvements in the planning area and downstream to more closely meet current standards.

The City should look for opportunities to partner with private development to upgrade the drainage system infrastructure as redevelopment occurs, as the City's budget allows. Drainage improvements should also be coordinated with the rail project and the redesign/ reconstruction of Riverside Drive.

Evaluate the potential for participation in the Regional Stormwater Management Program

The Regional Stormwater Management Program (RSMP) is available in the Country Club watershed. Private developers may participate in this program in lieu of constructing on-site storm water detention if the proposed development will produce no identifiable adverse impact to other properties due to increased runoff from the proposed development.

Encourage shared stormwater detention and water quality facilities

Where possible, the City should pursue public/private partnerships in the planning area to make available the option for regional stormwater detention and stormwater quality treatment for the development and redevelopment of the Corridor. As new development occurs, the City should look for opportunities to partner with developers to create regional detention facilities to serve greater areas, rather than each project having on-site detention. The current City Code only requires redevelopment to mitigate for stormwater detention for increases in impervious cover. Therefore, most if not all the cost for regional stormwater detention will require funding by the City.

It is not feasible for all properties in the Corridor to participate in regional detention (by participation in the RSMP for the Country Club watershed or through the construction of a regional facility) and treatment, nor would all property developers or owners choose to participate even if it is feasible. Per the City's current policy, those sites will be required to provide on-site stormwater quality control and detention facilities if they cannot or choose not to participate in a regional option. New development or redevelopment is encouraged to enter into cooperative agreements with surrounding properties to provide detention or other stormwater management facilities that serve multiple properties.

Developers should consider coordinating and co-locating detention facilities with locations identified for open space or pocket parks. Where feasible, new parks should be designed to include flood control and water quality facilities. All properties purchased or dedicated for public buildings should also be evaluated to include potential sites for additional regional water quality and stormwater detention facilities.

Development should incorporate green infrastructure for stormwater quality management

The use of smaller "green infrastructure" – innovative water quality within the landscape – at multiple locations throughout a site can increase the efficiency of treating stormwater for more frequent, smaller storm events. The smaller facilities (i.e. series of facilities) can also provide preliminary treatment for larger infrequent storm events. The smaller stormwater facilities should be designed as part of the landscape and open space network. The size of stormwater facilities is directly related to the size of the facility watershed. The amount of impervious cover within the watershed and the speed of conveyance through the watershed to the facility outfall also contribute to the required size of the stormwater facility.

To reduce the size of stormwater quality treatment

Water & Stormwater Options for the Corridor

facilities, smaller green infrastructure facilities, including biofiltration ponds, vegetative filter strips, xeriscaping, bioswales, rain gardens, re-irrigation ponds, and rain water harvesting, among others, can also be used to reduce the rate and volume, including the speed of conveyance, for stormwater. Approved green infrastructure methods that contribute towards water quality development requirements are outlined in the ECM. Although pervious pavement is not permitted within the LDC for reductions in impervious cover for vehicular areas, it is allowed for impervious cover reductions for pedestrian areas. Pervious pavement including asphalt, concrete and unit pavers can be used throughout the Corridor to reduce impervious cover. Infiltration rates of pervious pavement can be calculated to determine the rate and volume for stormwater, though its long-term effectiveness is impacted significantly by maintenance practices and clogging sediment.

Green roofs can be used to reduce the effect of heat island and to create a more sustainable city. Unfortunately, preliminary studies performed by the City of Austin have demonstrated the use of green roofs for water quality control has been unsuccessful for improving stormwater management; as such, green roofs are currently not included as a permitted City of Austin method for stormwater management. Initial findings indicate that the fertilization and maintenance of green roof landscapes have actually worsened water quality. Integrated pest management (IPM) programs, which should include guidelines for landscape fertilization, as well as programs for testing and enforcement of IPM programs, may present opportunities for green roofs.

The City should continue evaluating and monitoring alternative stormwater quality management practices including green roofs. The City has an accepted approach of evaluating new and emerging technologies. These evaluations could lead to future regulations to allow additional alternative water quality practices.

Design new streets with green stormwater quality treatment infrastructure

Consideration should be given in the design of all new streets to incorporate vegetative filter strips, and/or biofiltration systems in the medians and/or on the perimeter of streets to treat stormwater. Street tree zones located between the sidewalk and the street provide an opportunity to include site specific stormwater quality controls while also taking advantage of the stormwater to irrigate the trees and other vegetation. The inclusion of green storm water quality treatment is in addition to the requirement to convey stormwater off the street and not cause flooding of any infrastructure. Placement of trees should be compatible with existing and/or proposed storm drain infrastructure.

Preserve natural streambeds to better manage stormwater

Natural landscape buffers to creeks and tributaries allow stormwater to infiltrate into the groundwater more slowly before entering the streambed, which results in improving water quality and decreasing the velocity of the stormwater flowing through easily erosive soil areas.

Natural streambeds should be preserved, buffers maintained and existing concrete lined channels should be evaluated for their ability to be returned to a "natural state". This may require additional easement acquisition, as necessary, to maintain or increase the current capacity of the channels. There are existing standards in LDC Section 25-8 for suburban watershed standards and regulations to ensure the streams and creeks in the watersheds are preserved. These standards could be strengthened to better regulate and maintain stream buffers.

Water Conservation

As much as 60% of potable water consumption is attributable to landscape irrigation during summer months. There are many options to reduce potable water demand. Some of these options include using reclaimed water, gray water and stormwater in place of potable water, where feasible. Reclaimed water is created by reusing treated wastewater effluent that is normally discharged to a natural system (i.e. Colorado River). Gray water is typically any water that has been used, except water from toilets. Stormwater is water created by rain fall that is typically collected from roofs, but can also be collected from parking lots or other impervious surfaces.

The City of Austin currently has a Water Reclamation Program, in which highly treated effluent from the City's wastewater treatment plant is skimmed off, or reclaimed, placed in tanks, and piped to customers for use for irrigation, cooling, and manufacturing, instead of being discharged to the Colorado River. The City has a construction project, almost ready to bid, that will reactivate an abandoned force main and bring reclaimed water to within 1.5 miles of the East Riverside Corridor. Another construction project, in the late planning stage, will bring reclaimed water to Guerrero Park and the periphery of the Corridor. In addition to these mains, master plans call for reclaimed water mains along East Riverside Drive and Pleasant Valley Road. To support this network of mains, an elevated storage tank will be needed on high ground south of East Riverside Drive.

The City of Austin currently uses reclaimed water for golf course irrigation and irrigation at Sand Hill Energy Center. The City is engaged in preliminary planning to provide reclaimed water to the Robert Mueller Airport redevelopment and the University of Texas, the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, and the Onion Creek Soccer Complex. Other Texas cities also use reclaimed water for various purposes. For example, San Antonio uses reclaimed water to supplement stream flows in its famed River Walk. El Paso uses reclaimed water for irrigation throughout the city and many Texas cities such as Amarillo, Georgetown, Lakeway, Las Colinas, Lubbock and Odessa use reclaimed water for irrigation of golf courses, ball fields, and landscaping.

Water Conservation Recommendations:

The City should make reclaimed water available for redevelopment in the East Riverside Corridor area

The City should continue to make progress in implementing the Reclaimed Water master plan to install water mains along East Riverside Drive and Pleasant Valley Road in order to provide reclaimed water infrastructure to facilitate redevelopment in and around the Corridor. When the reclaimed water system is completed in the East Riverside Corridor area, it should be able to provide a significant amount of irrigation water for landscape and open space for the entire Corridor. Further, a non-potable irrigation system should significantly reduce the need for potable water infrastructure and produce a revenue stream for the Water Reclamation Program. The City should provide information to developers in the area about how to design for inclusion of reclaimed water infrastructure and use in their developments.

Incorporate water conservation measures early in project design

Water conservation measures should be incorporated early in the design of all new development. The need for irrigation should be minimized by using xeriscaping. Water efficient irrigation systems (drip irrigation, microsprays, etc) should be used where irrigation is provided. Where possible, stormwater should be captured and redirected for irrigation purposes through rainwater harvesting, rain gardens and other innovative stormwater controls. Parks, open space, and other areas where large spaces require irrigation should be designed so that it can connect to the reclaimed water infrastructure in the future.

Electric & Natural Gas

No capacity analysis or studies were conducted for electric and natural gas service in the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area. The electrical services adequacy will need to be determined by Austin Energy. Natural gas is provided by private companies. Capacity and availability will be determined by the individual private companies.

Electric Infrastructure Recommendations:

Place power lines underground

This Plan recommends that existing overhead power lines be placed or relocated underground to the extent possible along the Corridor. While this is an expensive proposition, this practice promotes the plan's vision of a pedestrian-friendly streetscape and overall aesthetic enhancement of the Corridor. New development and redevelopment should place power lines underground from the building to the property line. The benefits of placing the electrical lines underground also include a greater ability to place trees in the streetscape without interference with the overhead lines and the ability to build sidewalks without undesirable obstructions.

SECTION 7

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

INTRODUCTION
AUSTIN'S HOUSING NEED
ERC HOUSING INVENTORY
HOUSING RESOURCES
PRESERVATION OF AFF. HOUSING
POLICY CHALLENGES
TOOLS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Introduction

Housing affordability has become a significant issue in the City of Austin, especially in areas located in close proximity to downtown, such as the East Riverside area. In order to maintain a robust economy and diverse community, Austin residents need housing that accommodates all types of living situations. A thriving community includes a variety of housing types – single-family homes, duplexes, apartments (from small to large complexes), and condominiums – that serve a variety of people – single adults, couples, families, elderly people, and people with disabilities – at a variety of income levels. This chapter outlines the housing needs in the City, highlights the specific needs for the East Riverside Corridor, and identifies affordable housing initiatives and tools the City can utilize to create and maintain affordable housing.

Austin's Housing Needs

Housing costs in Austin have risen by 85 percent in the past 10 years. The median value of a single family home in Austin was $129,900 in 1998. By 2008, the median had increased almost 90 percent to $240,000. This is a dramatic change from the previous decades. According to a 1998 study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), from 1970 to 1990, Austin was one of the most affordable places to live in the country. Today homeowners who have lived for generations in one neighborhood can no longer afford increasing property taxes. In some areas, rising values are encouraging multifamily property owners to sell their properties or convert to condominium ownership.

Austin is a majority-renter city. Fifty-four percent of Austin households rent, while the balance own the home in which they reside. The City's homeownership rate is likely to stabilize and possibly decrease modestly with the current slowdown in mortgage lending. Even if the homeownership rate increases, rental property will continue to play a large part in housing Austin's residents.

Increasing moderately priced housing stock in Austin is crucial to recruit and keep entry-level workers and sustain economic growth in the urban core. In addition, increasing the supply of affordable housing in Austin's urban core improves the quality of life for all residents as they face shorter commutes, less pollution, fully-funded essential public services, and more equal tax burdens.

The federal government defines housing affordability in terms of the proportion of household income that is used to pay housing costs. Housing is "affordable" if no more than 30 percent of a household's monthly income is needed for rent, mortgage payments and utilities. When the proportion of household income needed to

Exhibit 7.1: *Austin Area Median Family Income Chart, 2009*

MSA: Austin – Round Rock, TX.

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30% Median Income *(30% of median defined by HUD)*	15,400	17,600	19,800	22,000	23,750	25,550	27,300	29,050
40% Median Income*	20,500	23,450	26,400	29,300	31,650	34,000	36,350	38,700
50% Median Income *(very low income defined by HUD)*	25,650	29,300	33,000	36,650	39,600	42,500	45,450	48,400
60% Median Income*	30,800	35,200	39,600	44,000	47,500	51,000	54,550	58,050
65% Median Income*	33,350	38,100	42,900	47,650	51,450	55,250	59,100	62,900
80% Median Income *(low-income defined by HUD)*	41,050	46,900	52,800	58,650	63,350	68,050	72,750	77,400
100% Median Income	51,300	58,650	65,950	73,300	79,150	85,050	90,900	96,750
120% Median Income	61,550	70,350	79,150	87,950	95,000	102,050	109,050	116,100

* MFI figures were internally calculated and not defined directly by HUD; to be used for other program purposes only

pay housing costs exceeds 30 percent, a household is considered "cost burdened."

Housing costs are also examined in the context of the median family income (MFI). Federal housing programs divide low and moderate income households into categories, based on their relationship to the MFI: very low-income (earning 30 percent or less of the MFI), low-income (earning between 31 and 50 percent of the MFI), and moderate-income (earning between 51 and 80 percent of the MFI). The current MFI for the Austin area is $73,300. See Exhibit 7.1.

The 2008 Housing Market Study demonstrates Austin's need for affordable housing stock for both renters and homeowners. With more growth occurring on the outskirts of Austin, there has been an increase of affordable stock in the far southern and northern portions of the region; however, the supply of affordable housing has decreased in central, west and northwest Austin. Addressing the need for affordable housing now and in the future will require the community's commitment to increase affordable housing stock for both rental and ownership units.

Rental Needs

Austin has a significant need for affordable rental housing. The city's rental market is narrowly priced, with 79 percent of units priced between $550 and $1,150 per month. The need for affordable rental housing is particularly concentrated for those earning 0-30 percent of the area's median family income—just one in six renters earning less than $20,000 can find affordable housing in Austin. In 2008, Austin's renters earning less than $20,000 per year – 44,700 renters – had about 7,000 affordable units in the market from which to choose. This means that there are approximately 38,000 more renters earning less than $20,000 per year than there are affordable units in the market available to them. This total includes subsidized units and vouchers available through the Housing Choice Voucher program, a federally funded program administered locally by the Housing Authority of the City of Austin and the Housing Authority of Travis County, that helps families pay their rent. In order to reduce the existing gap of low-cost rental units (priced at $425 and less) by 10 percent by 2020, 16,500 units, or 1,370 units each year should be created.

Homeownership Needs

Those earning less than $50,000 who want to buy a home in Austin would have found 16% of the market affordable to them in 2008. Austin has a need for homes priced between $113,000 and $240,000 to enable its renter population earning between $35,000 and $75,000 per year to become homeowners. In many cities, this demand for affordable homes is partially fulfilled through attached housing (duplex/condos/townhomes); however, in Austin, this ownership product is currently limited.

The median home price of all homes in Austin as of October 2008 was $240,000. The median price for detached single family homes was $260,000 and the median price for a single family attached home was $199,000. The Riverside, Pleasant Valley, and Montopolis neighborhoods surround the East Riverside Corridor planning area. The average home price in the Riverside neighborhood ($177,820) is significantly higher than in Montopolis ($153,525) and Pleasant Valley ($152,559). It should be noted that the stock of owner-occupied housing is only 1/5 the size of rental stock. See Exhibit 7.2 for more detailed information on home prices in the area.

Exhibit 7.2: *Average Listing Prices*

Area	Multifamily	Single Family Attached	Single Family Detached	Average Home Price
Pleasant Valley	$204,975.00	$115,234.00	$222,018.00	$152,559.00
Riverside	$198,089.00	$102,172.00	$322,444.00	$177,820.00
Montopolis	$158,844.00	$162,157.00	$148,598.00	$153,525.00

Source: City of Austin Comprehensive Housing Market Study (2009)

East Riverside Corridor (ERC) Housing Inventory

The general East Riverside area currently provides more affordable rents than the city average. In the third quarter of 2009, the average rent for the Southeast quadrant of the city, which is larger than the East Riverside Corridor and encompasses the East Riverside/Oltorf, Montopolis, and Southeast Planning Areas, is $666; while the average rent in Travis County is $793 and the average rent in the Austin MSA is $787. To afford the average rent in the Southeast area, a household needs to earn $26,640 (36% of Median Family Income). The area also has a high number of units under construction. According to Austin Investor Interests, 15% of the units currently under construction in Austin in the third quarter of 2009 were located in the Southeast quadrant.

The area contains affordable rental housing for families and students located relatively close to the central business district, and includes amenities such as public transit and neighborhood level retail. Some of this affordable housing stock has been impacted by redevelopment over the last several years. While this trend is likely to continue, the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan serves to offer a framework by which redevelopment can occur that is responsive to community values and stakeholder input, while managing to address the needs of all citizens living in the area, now and in the future.

In September 2009, the City of Austin conducted a housing inventory of multi-family properties with more than 50 units as part of its analysis of affordable housing preservation in Austin. In the defined East Riverside Corridor planning area, there are a total of 32 multifamily properties with more than 50 units. These include subsidized properties as well as market-rate properties. While none of the 32 properties are affordable to individuals making below 30 percent MFI, the majority

Exhibit 7.3: *Housing Inventory for the East Riverside Corridor*

Market-Rate Housing Inventory In East Riverside Corridor

(Apartment Complexes with 50+ units)

Type*	# of Properties	# of Units	Total Units in COA	% of COA
Affordable to 0-30% MFI	0	0	565	0%
Affordable to 31-50% MFI	17	3,685	58,204	6%
Affordable to 51% MFI and above	7	2,045	248,231	1%
Total	24	5,730	307,000	2%

* Units are affordable if estimated cost of combined rent and utilities are no more than 30% of monthly income

Subsidized Housing In East Riverside Corridor

Type	# of Properties	# of Affordable Units	Total Units in COA	% of COA
City of Austin Funded (does not include any LIHTC)	1	284	3,448	8%
TDHCA Tax Credits (LIHTC)	7	1,440	8,842	16%
Project Based Section 8	0	0	1,967	0%
HACA - Public Housing	0	0	1,928	0
Total	8	1,724	16,185	11%

Source: Austin Investor Interests (2nd Quarter 2009), Austin Comprehensive Housing Market Study, City of Austin Affordable Housing Inventory

are affordable to those making between 30 percent to 50 percent MFI (see Exhibit 7.3). The rest of the properties are affordable only to those making above 50 percent MFI, or they are currently under construction. The Housing Market Study found that among market-rate properties with more than 50 units in Austin, there are only nine properties with 565 units in Austin that provide units affordable to those making 30% MFI or below. The majority of these apartments are located in north Austin. The market-rate multifamily housing inventory in the East Riverside corridor comprises about 2% of the total housing inventory of multi-family housing units with more than 50 units in the City of Austin.

Of the 32 multifamily properties with more than 50 units in the Corridor, eight received public subsidies, providing 1,724 units (23% of total units in the Corridor). The subsidized multifamily housing in the East Riverside Corridor comprises approximately 11% of the total subsidized multifamily housing in the City of Austin, while the estimated population in the same area is 1% of the population of the City of Austin. The Corridor contains 16% of the units in Austin created through the Housing Tax Credit program (administered through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs), a total of 1,440 units.

Exhibit 7.4: *Housing Inventory for Zip Code 78741*

Market-Rate Housing Inventory in Zip Code 78741
(Apartment Complexes with 50+ units)

Type*	# of Units	Total Units in COA	% of COA
Affordable to 0-30% MFI	0	565	0%
Affordable to 31-51% MFI	8,249	58,204	14%
Affordable to 51% MFI and above	8,586	248,231	3%
Total	16,835	307,000	5%

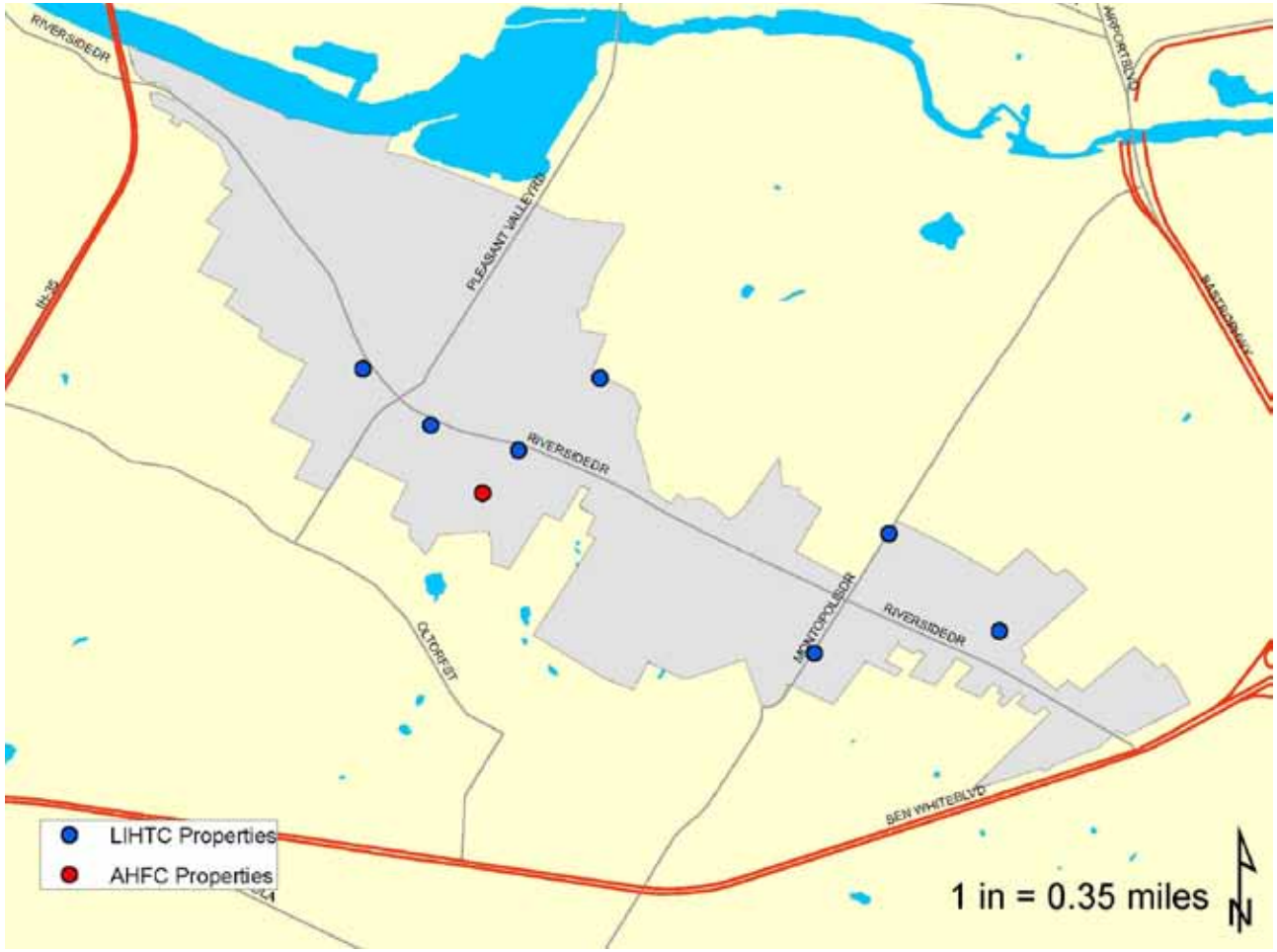
* Units are affordable if estimated cost of combined rent and utilities are no more than 30% of monthly income

Subsidized Housing Inventory in Zip Code 78741

Type	# of Affordable Units	Total Units in COA	% of COA
City of Austin Funded (does not include any LIHTC)	646	3448	19%
TDHCA Tax Credits (LIHTC)	2261	8842	26%
Project Based Section 8	228	1967	12%
HACA - Public Housing	0	1928	0%
Total	3135	16,185	19%

Source: Austin Investor Interests (2nd Quarter 2009), Austin Comprehensive Housing Market Study, City of Austin Affordable Housing Inventory

Exhibit 7.5: *Subsidized Affordable Housing in the East Riverside Corridor*



Source: City of Austin Affordable Housing Inventory

Exhibit 7.5 shows the locations of subsidized affordable housing in the East Riverside Corridor planning area. Properties subsidized by Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) are shown in blue and properties subsidized by the Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) are shown in red.

Exhibit 7.6 illustrates the number of rental units by class in the Austin MSA, Southeast Quadrant, and the East Riverside Corridor. Class C properties are generally more affordable than Class A and B properties. Looking at the characteristics of the properties within the Corridor, approximately half of the properties are designated as Class C properties. The other half are about evenly split between Class A and B.

Exhibit 7.6: *Number of Rental Units by Class**

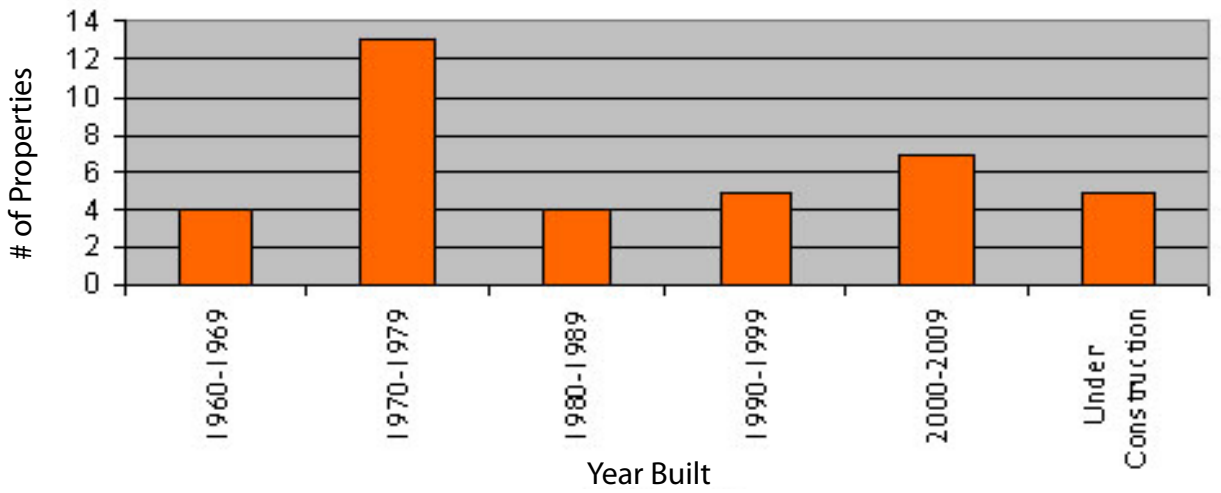
Location	Class A	Class B	Class C	Total Units
East Riverside Corridor	932 (13%)	2697 (37%)	3679 (50%)	7,308
Southeast	4,308 (23%)	4,908 (26%)	9,766 (51%)	18,982
Austin MSA	28,674 (23%)	39,770 (31%)	57,899 (46%)	126,383

Source: Austin Investor Interests (2nd Quarter, 2009)

* Unit numbers do not include those currently/proposed to be under construction

The median year in which the 32 multifamily properties with more than 50 units in the corridor were built is 1985, using estimated completion dates for the properties under construction. Excluding those under construction, the median square footage of the units in the corridor is 845 square feet.

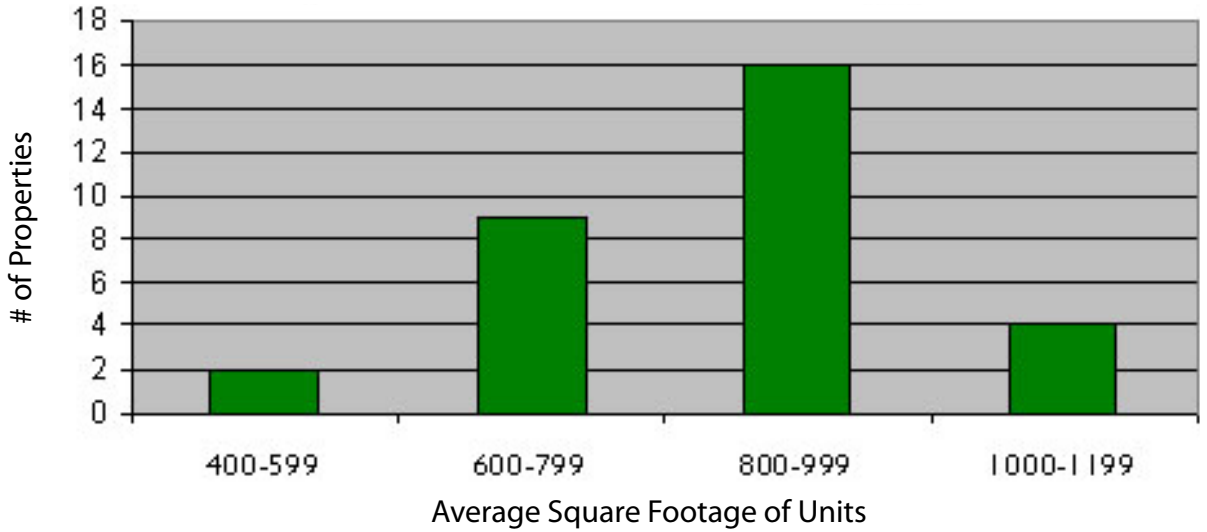
Exhibit 7.7: *Year Built of Properties in the East Riverside Corridor*



Source: Austin Investor Interests (2nd Quarter, 2009)

Exhibit 7.8: *Average Square Footage of Units in East Riverside Properties**

*Properties under construction were excluded from graph



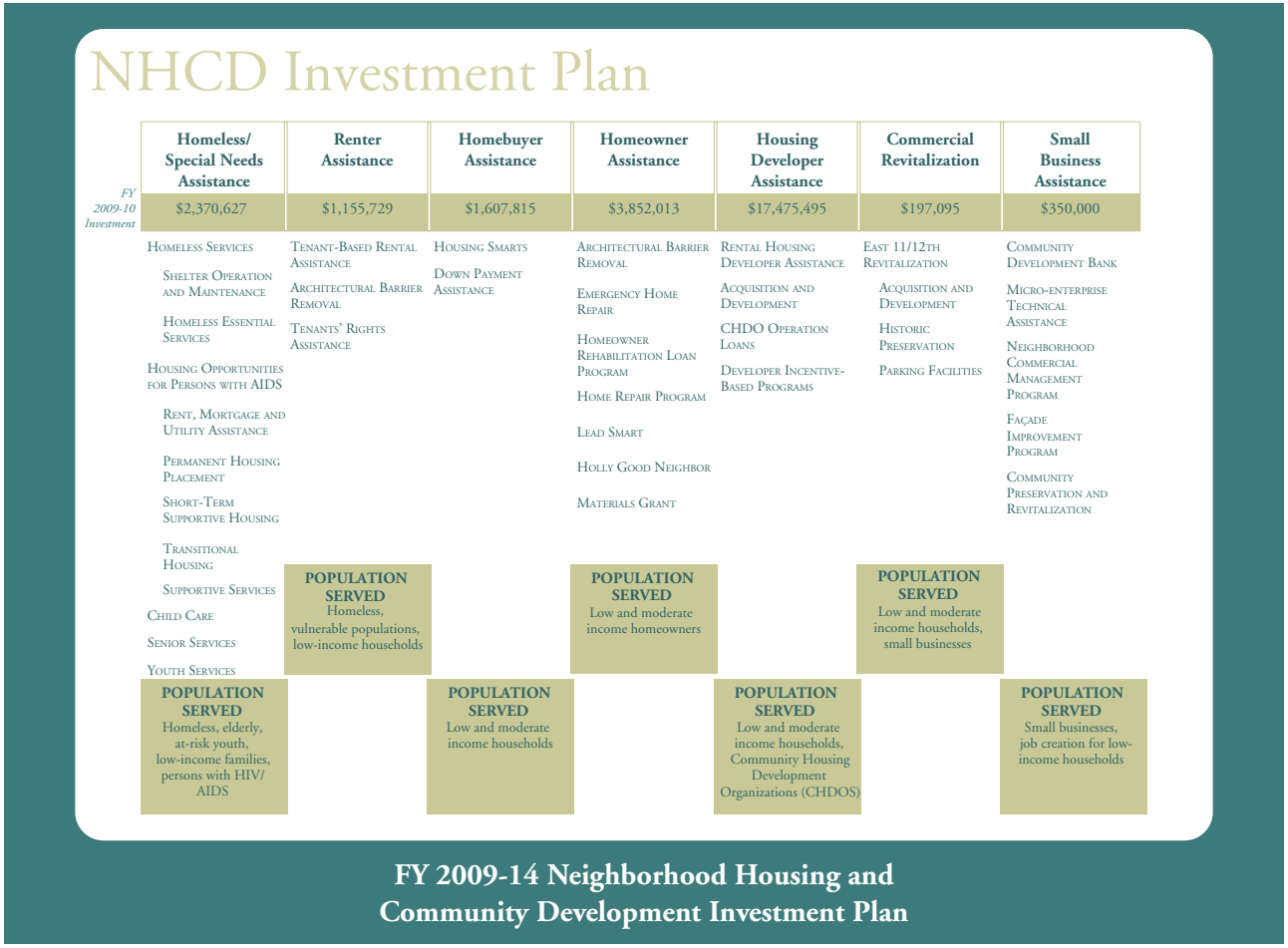
Source: Austin Investor Interests (2nd Quarter, 2009)

Housing Resources

The City of Austin provides housing and services to help meet the need for affordable housing for both renters and homeowners, and especially for very-low income households. Neighborhood Housing and Community Development's (NHCD) mission is to provide housing, community development, and small business development services to benefit eligible residents so they can have access to livable neighborhoods and increase their opportunities for self-sufficiency. To accomplish this mission, NHCD directly administers a variety of programs to serve the community's housing, community development, and economic development needs in addition to providing grant funding to various agencies and non-profit organizations.

In 2009, as a part of the federally-mandated five year Consolidated Planning process, NHCD created an investment plan to highlight programs offered by the City of Austin and the City's investment in each program area, which reflects stakeholder feedback and community participation. The plan provides a snapshot of services and activities made possible by federal and local funding. The investment plan outlines housing and community development activities in seven categories, each category highlighting populations served and activities funded.

Exhibit 7.9: *NHCD Investment Plan*



FY 2009-14 Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Investment Plan

The Investment Plan categories are: (1) Homeless/ Special Needs; (2) Renter Assistance; (3) Homebuyer Assistance; (4) Homeowner Assistance; (5) Housing Developer Assistance; (6) Commercial Revitalization; (7) Small Business Assistance. More information about each of these categories is below.

Homeless/Special Needs Assistance provides services to the City's most vulnerable populations. This includes programs funded with Emergency Shelter Grants to serve the homeless population and operate the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH). This category also includes housing services for persons with HIV/ AIDS, as well as public services, such as youth services, child care, and senior services, funded from the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

Renter Assistance provides assistance to renters so that rent is more affordable as well as provides tenants' rights services to equip renters with information that may resolve conflicts and improve relationships. It also provides financial assistance for necessary rehabilitations to make homes accessible to elderly and disabled renters.

Homebuyer Assistance provides counseling to renters who wish to become homebuyers and provides financial counseling to current and potential homeowners to assist households to stay in their homes. This category includes the Down Payment Assistance Program, which offers loans to qualifying low- and moderate-income homebuyers to help them buy their first homes.

Homeowner Assistance provides services for low- and moderate-income individuals who own their homes, but need assistance to make their homes safe, functional, and/or accessible.

Housing Developer Assistance includes NHCD programs that offer assistance to for-profit and non-profit developers to build or renovate affordable housing. NHCD provides gap financing to assist developers to build rental and homebuyer housing for low- and moderate-income households. To assure the success of the City's non-profit partners, the City also provides operating expenses grants to certified housing development organizations to help increase their capacity to develop affordable housing. In this category, the City also continues to explore ways to encourage the development of affordable housing through developer incentives. These developer incentives include S.M.A.R.T. HousingTM, incentives for development in priority areas, and private developer agreements.

Commercial Revitalization includes programs related to the revitalization of the East 11th/12th street corridors. These programs include commercial acquisition and development, loan development assistance, job creation, and historic preservation efforts related to the Hamilton-Dietrich House as well as parking facilities within the corridor.

Small Business Assistance provides a range of services for small business, from technical assistance to gap financing, to ensure the success of growing small business in the community, and encourage the creation of jobs for low- and moderate-income households.

Exhibit 7.10: *FY 2009-2010 NHCD Housing Programs in 78741*

Program	Activity	Description	Eligible Households
Housing Programs			
Homebuyer Assistance	Down Payment Assistance	Provides deferred and forgivable, zero-interest loans to low and moderate income first time homebuyers. Option 1: recaptured loan up to $10,000 per HH (or $15,000 to persons with disabilities.) Option 2: shared-equity, non-forgivable, loan up to $40,000 for down payment.	<80% MFI
	Housing Smarts	Provides pre-purchase, post-purchase, and one-on-one housing counseling in English and Spanish	< 80% MFI
Homeowner Assistance	Architectural Barrier Removal	Modifies or retrofits the living quarters of eligible, low-income elderly and severely disabled homeowners to make their housing more accessible.	<80% MFI
	Emergency Home Repair	Makes repairs to alleviate life-threatening living conditions and health and safety hazards for low and moderate income homeowners.	<80% MFI
	Homeowner Rehabilitation Loan	Assists income-eligible homeowners with substantial repairs through deferred interest loans up to $50,000. Necessary reconstructs up to $100,000.	<60% MFI
	Home Repair Program	Provides grants to local non-profits to assist low- and moderate-income homeowners to address substandard housing conditions.	<80% MFI
	Lead Hazard Control Grant	Provides lead hazard control services to owners and renters in units built prior to 1978 with children under age 6.	<80% MFI
	Materials Grants Program	Provides eligible non-profit organizations with assistance to recover the cost of materials used to repair the homes of low-income families.	<60% MFI
Renter Assistance	Tenant Based Rental Assistance	Provides rental housing subsidies deposits to eligible families who would otherwise be homeless through the Passages Program.	< 50% MFI
	Tenant's Rights	Provides mediation, counseling, public information and addresses fair housing complaints for renters.	N/A
	Architectural Barrier Removal	Modifies or retrofits the living quarters of eligible, low-income elderly and severely disabled renters to make their housing more accessible.	<80% MFI
Housing Developer Assistance	Rental Housing Development Assistance	Provides below market rate gap financing to for-profit and non-profit developers for the acquisition, new construction, or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing.	< 50% MFI
	Acquisition and Development	City and federal funds for: 1) acquisition and development of lots, and 2) acquisition, rehabilitation, and construction of new homes.	<80% MFI
	CHDO Operations	Provides technical assistance and training to Community Housing Development Organizations to increase organizational capacity.	N/A
	Developer Incentives Program	Provides incentives for housing developer to develop affordable rental and homebuyer housing in market rate developments. Currently includes, S.M.A.R.T. HousingTM, Vertical Mized Use, Downtown Density Bonus, North Burnet/Gateway, and Transit Oriented Developments.	<80% MFI or <120% MFI in the CBD

Residents of the East Riverside corridor are eligible for and currently utilize many of these types of assistance. See Exhibit 7.10 for a list of City housing programs that serve residents in Zip Code 78741, which includes the East Riverside Corridor.

Preservation of Affordable Housing

Several studies commissioned by the City pinpoint the loss of existing affordable rental housing as a mounting problem in Austin. These include the Comprehensive Housing Market Study (March 2009), the ROMA/HR&A Affordable Housing Strategy Report (July 2009) and the City of Austin report, Preserving Affordable Housing in Austin, A Platform for Action (April 2008). In addition, HousingWorks' efforts and stakeholders at public hearings for the Consolidated Plan identified preservation as a priority for Austin's affordable housing efforts.

The City's 2008 preservation report highlights several facts regarding affordability in Austin including:

- ***Subsidized units are at risk.*** Austin has almost 1,350 of project-based Section 8 units with mortgages that will expire by 2011, with about 73 percent of those expiring in 2010. In addition, developments financed with federal housing tax credits reach the end of their affordability requirements after 15 years. Therefore, affordability in tax credit developments completed after 1994 will begin to expire, and owners will no longer be required to offer affordable units. The number of units financed with tax credits in Austin is currently more than 8,000.

- ***Most of Austin affordable housing is privately-owned and not subsidized.*** Austin has more than 156,000 multifamily housing units; and 79 percent (123,678) are in small complexes with 2 to 49 units.

- ***Most multifamily stock is old but occupied.*** More than 55 percent of duplexes and 79 percent of small and medium-sized apartment buildings throughout the city were built before 1980. These apartments typically have high-occupancy rates.

- ***Redevelopment is underway.*** From 1995-2007, there was a 30 percent increase in the number of multifamily units built. More than 2,000 rental units were converted to condominiums in 2007 and 2008.

- ***Collecting data on housing inventory posed a significant challenge.*** Data regarding the condition of Austin's housing units is largely unavailable. In addition, reliable data sources have conflicting unit counts for subsidized properties.

In response to these conditions, the City of Austin Preservation Report released in April 2008 included the following recommendations:

(1) Develop and share data and strengthen intergovernmental coordination to increase opportunities for preservation in high opportunity areas;
(2) Maximize use of partnerships by promoting existing programs and services to affordable housing targeted for preservation;
(3) Explore education and outreach initiatives to help ensure low income residents have reasonable avenues through education to remain in affordable housing;
(4) Pursue new strategies to bring forward alternative resources and incentives, expanding on efforts to increase long-term, permanent affordability; and
(5) Create a preservation funding pool, making available crucial revenue streams to developers in need of new resources.

NHCD offers a number of programs including Rental Housing Developer Assistance program, Acquisition and Development and Tenants' Rights Assistance, as well as home repair and rehabilitation programs, which position the department to contribute toward preservation efforts in Austin. See Exhibit 7.9, NHCD's fiscal years 2009-14 Investment Plan, for a list of NHCD's affordable housing and community development programs. In addition, several other affordable housing preservation initiatives that are already underway are identified below:

- ***Develop and share data/Expand intergovernmental coordination.***

- Maintaining Subsidized Apartments. The City of Austin works closely with the Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA) that founded the Southwest Housing Compliance Corporation (SHCC) in 2000 to oversee project-based Section 8 properties. HACA has won competitive contracts to administer all such properties in Texas and Arkansas. Nationwide this program is administered by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). Property owners must notify oversight agencies if they wish to "opt out" of the program one year in advance of the expiration of their subsidies. The City of Austin/Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) will continue to offer its assistance in preserving Austin project-based Section 8 properties by working closely with key agencies that can be instrumental in preservation efforts.

- Intergovernmental coordination also is underway through the Community Action Network, specifically to develop an Issue Area Group focused on housing. The Group will bring together representatives from city, county, state, and federal housing agencies among other housing experts to identify actions needed to address housing issues locally and regionally. These experts with diverse funding resources are well positioned to elevate best practices and further the community's preservation efforts.

Other groups that have been developed that have strengthened housing coordination efforts in the last year are the Intergovernmental Stimulus committee, the Joint Subcommittee School Mobility-Housing Assistance working group, and HousingWorks' partnership with the Real Estate Council of Austin, the Urban Land Institute, and the Austin Area Research Organization.

• The City of Austin has developed a research framework to identify geographic areas located near employment centers, services, schools and transit corridors, and then to identify affordable apartment complexes – subsidized and market-rate -- in and near those areas. The goal is twofold – (1) to offer financial incentives to existing property owners who commit to maintaining affordable rents and (2) to enable affordable housing providers to acquire properties to secure permanent affordability in these prime locations.

• ***Partnerships.*** In addition to the partnerships described above with HACA, FHA's Region IV Office, and HousingWorks, the Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Office has strengthened its collaborations with other City departments to leverage resources. NHCD is working with Austin Energy's Weatherization program staff to coordinate AE services with NHCD's home repair and rehabilitation programs so that eligible clients can receive maximum benefit from the City. Cross promotion of programs can help reduce utility costs for property owners and ease certain ongoing maintenance issues.

NHCD also hosts quarterly Affordable Housing Forums providing regular educational outreach to the community about affordable housing. The Forums attract industry experts and members of the public and serve to address barriers and solutions to affordable housing. The issue of preservation of Austin's affordable housing stock is one of several focuses of these community conversations. For more information about the Affordable Housing Forums, please visit www.cityofaustin.org/housing.

• ***Tenant and consumer protections.*** The 2009 Impediments to Fair Housing report, a statutory requirement for the City of Austin's Consolidated Plan, cites affordability and discrimination as significant fair housing problems in Austin. The lack of affordable housing means that many low-income persons are living in substandard housing or tolerating discriminatory situations, such as apartments with little to no accessibility, for fear of not finding another affordable unit. The report also highlighted mortgage discrimination against Austin minorities. Of the nearly 36,000 loan applications submitted by Travis County residents in 2007, 12 percent were considered subprime. African American and Hispanic applicants were more likely to receive a subprime loan product. A survey completed for the 2009 Housing Market Study also revealed housing discrimination as a key concern of residents. To further address these issues, NHCD increased funding in 2009 for homebuyer education to include foreclosure prevention and counseling and increase funding for fair housing and tenant protections. NHCD is working with the City of Austin Fair Housing Office and the Austin Tenants' Council to enhance current programs that will continue to address this issue.

• ***New Strategies: Alternate resources/incentives.*** Discussions with the Community Development Commission (CDC), the housing department's policy advisory body, will continue to include housing program priorities and goals. Future policy recommendations are expected in several key issue areas, such as increasing the allocation of funds between rental and ownership from 60-40 percent to 75-25 percent, prioritizing preservation/rehabilitation projects, etc. These policy recommendations will help yield administrative changes to programs that steer funds toward affordable housing efforts including preservation initiatives.

• ***Preservation funding pool.*** Identifying new financial resources and partners with capital will be essential to the success of Austin's preservation efforts; however, it remains a challenge. NHCD has engaged national experts in the field of preservation in order to develop a loan pool, an essential tool to further the City's preservation strategy. A preservation funding pool will offer financial incentives to existing property owners who commit to maintaining affordable rents and enable affordable housing providers to acquire properties to secure permanent affordability in prime locations.

Policy Challenges

As indicated previously, the East Riverside Corridor contains more affordable options than other areas of the City, both in terms of subsidized housing and affordable market-rate housing. However, in recent years the area has seen significant redevelopment activity due to its proximity to Downtown and Lady Bird Lake. There is a concern that redevelopment could have a negative impact on existing low- and moderate- income residents and small businesses that currently benefit from the relatively low property values and rents. This presents challenges for decision-makers and the community.

The challenge of planning for the future of the East Riverside area while also retaining affordable housing stock is especially complex because the existing supply of privately-owned market rate affordable housing in the area is largely aging, Class C stock. In addition, there is development interest and pressure due to market forces to rehabilitate or replace older, existing units. Preservation and creation of affordable housing in the Corridor will be vital to provide housing options for households that wish to remain in the area as well as to provide a variety of housing options for future residents. To achieve a diverse, mixed-income community, housing should accommodate a variety of household sizes and types, including units designed for families with children.

Tools for Affordable Housing

The importance of housing that is affordable to a range of incomes in fostering diversity, contributing to the success of schools and supporting a jobs-housing balance, is well documented. Housing is important infrastructure for a successful community. Like other infrastructure needs identified in this plan, such as sidewalks, interconnected streets, and parks, the provision of affordable housing will be implemented through both public and private actions.

While there is a desire for existing residents and small businesses in the Corridor and surrounding areas to be able to afford to remain in the area as it improves, the redevelopment that is already occurring as well as rising property values in this area make this a challenge without significant public funding and intervention. Plans for other transit-oriented development areas in the City set goals for 25% affordable housing, which is to be achieved through both public and private-sector investments. A key difference between the Corridor and other TOD planning areas is that the others encompassed mostly commercial properties, and so the 25% goal would apply to the new supply of housing that is now permitted on properties previously zoned for commercial use.

In the East Riverside Corridor, although most of the properties immediately adjacent to Riverside Drive are commercially zoned, there are currently over 7,500 housing units, 1,724 of which are subsidized. Over 70% of existing housing units in the Corridor area are currently affordable to households at or below 50% MFI.

The goal and challenge in the East Riverside area is to ensure that as the area improves, housing is available to a range of incomes so that residents of all income levels, including existing low and moderate income residents, will be able to enjoy the benefits outlined in the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan. A key concern is to ensure that redevelopment promotes and allows for a mix of income levels, which can help to ameliorate potential issues in areas with disproportionate poverty rates. These can include a lack of amenities, few employment opportunities, and high crime rates; the challenge is to ensure that an income mix remains, rather than the Corridor becoming a place for only higher income residents to live.

The City of Austin must work with a number of other public/private agencies in order to address affordable housing needs throughout Austin. The implementation chapter of this document outlines both public investment opportunities and private development responsibilities to ensure affordable housing strategies can be achieved. To learn more about the City's affordable housing strategies for Austin, see the City of Austin fiscal year 2009-10 Action Plan, which is also available on the City's Web site at www.cityofaustin.org/housing. Key affordable housing strategies outlined in the Action Plan include continued public investment in the preservation and creation of affordable housing as well as policies to encourage development of affordable housing by the private sector.

For these reasons, this plan presents the following approaches to address the affordable housing challenges of the area:

- ***Maintain and renew existing subsidized affordable housing.*** The City of Austin through the Austin Housing Finance Corporation has invested more than $25 million to support affordable housing in the 78741 zip code. A portion of those funds were invested in affordable housing within the East Riverside Corridor

boundaries; subsidized housing currently accounts for 23% of existing housing supply within the Corridor boundaries. The City of Austin Neighborhood Housing and Community Development office will continue to work with other housing agencies to ensure that when possible, federally subsidized contracts are renewed providing for the preservation of affordable housing. None of the existing subsidized housing units in the Corridor are located in the potential development bonus areas recommended by the East Riverside Corridor Plan, and thus would not receive any extra entitlements or other direct incentives to redevelop.

- ***Preserve existing non-subsidized affordable housing.*** Austin should consider additional preservation strategies that have proven to be successful in other urban areas. Specific initiatives might include initiating an assessment of at-risk properties and developing an early warning system; creating loan programs and/or providing tax abatements and exemptions to assist landlords with rehabilitation costs; using in-lieu-of fees to subsidize existing market-rate affordable complexes; and developing or expanding loan programs that help current renters purchase homes in the area.

- ***Increase supply of housing - especially attached affordable homeownership housing products - to address the limited product of this type available in the Corridor area in conjunction with high demand.*** As described in the Land Use chapter of this plan, it is recommended that the City change development regulations based on the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan to allow development of housing near transit, especially attached housing units such as duplexes, condos, and townhouses that provide opportunities for affordable homeownership. The planning area includes commercial properties and undeveloped land that can accommodate many new residents without displacing current residents. This change can accommodate some of the city's expected population growth and help to combat the central city housing supply problem. A density bonus program could also potentially provide homeownership opportunities.

Although it is unlikely that new market rate units constructed in the western end of the planning area (closer to downtown) will be affordable to families making less than 80% median family income, as shown by recent developments, some new market-rate units constructed closer to Hwy 71 may address this need. Increasing the supply of housing throughout the Corridor could reduce market pressure on prices and rents for older housing stock. Since existing properties in the East Riverside Corridor Planning Area will likely redevelop at different times, this would provide mixed housing products, as well as a range of housing prices.

- ***Encourage private sector funding and/or construction of affordable housing through the provision of Development Bonuses.*** The details of the affordable housing requirements in exchange for a development bonus will be prescribed in the Regulating Plan in the next phase following adoption of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan. In limited areas closest to primary transit hubs, development bonuses could be granted to developers who agree to provide rental or ownership affordable housing in exchange for increased building entitlements. In order to reduce the incentive to redevelop existing affordable multi-family properties, policy makers could decide that only properties without existing residential developments would be eligible for development bonuses. Where allowed, the development bonuses would result in the inclusion of affordable housing units mixed with market-rate units in a single development, or developers could pay a fee-in-lieu and provide a dedicated funding source for the City's Housing Assistance Fund to use to create and preserve affordable housing. While it is recognized that this option will only provide a limited number of affordable units, it creates a new source of affordable housing and/or funds without resulting in displacement of existing affordable units.

- ***Expand public sector funding of affordable housing.*** The City will continue to apply affordable housing strategies that promote the affordable housing core values developed by the City of Austin Affordable Housing Incentives Task Force, which prescribes action that will promote deeper affordability targets, long-term affordability, and geographic dispersion, as well as zoning incentives.

The geographic distribution and prioritization of public funding for affordable housing is determined through a citywide affordable housing preservation strategy. As stated previously, 11% of the total subsidized multi-family housing in the city is located in the East Riverside Corridor planning area. Several key factors that drive public investment for the creation and preservation of affordable housing are:

- Promotion of the City of Austin's affordable housing core values: deeper affordability targets, long-term affordability, and geographic dispersion of affordable housing.
- Areas of town with existing affordable housing stock that is in appropriate condition for rehabilitation.
- Areas undergoing intense redevelopment pressure where displacement of low-income residents is likely.
- Areas with existing and planned proximity to transit and services.
- Areas where the City is making other public investments

and can incorporate affordable housing to further the investment in important community benefits.

Similarly, decision-makers can consider other dedicated funding sources to support additional affordable housing, either citywide or specifically in this Corridor.

- ***Explore feasibility of a TOD catalyst project on the City-owned land at the East Riverside Drive/ Pleasant Valley Blvd. intersection.*** If existing utility, slope and drainage issues can be overcome, the City should explore reconfiguring the East Riverside Drive/Pleasant Valley Blvd. intersection during rail planning to utilize the existing large City-owned median for development of a TOD catalyst project and a true neighborhood center for the area. Developing a TOD pilot project will be an important way to set an example of the type of development and community benefits envisioned in this plan, and spur employment interest in the Corridor. To the extent possible, such a project should support an employment center to improve local job opportunities for existing and future residents in the immediate area and also include housing affordable to a mix of incomes. The integration of residences, daily community services and employment, in addition to creating safe routes for pedestrian and cyclists will be essential to its success.

- ***Promote community-based housing development organizations.*** The City allocates financing for non-profit housing developers, or Certified Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs), to build affordable housing, recognizing that nonprofits are important partners in providing and preserving affordable housing in Austin. A new or existing non-profit CHDO focused on the East Riverside community could assist in the creation of affordable housing in the Corridor.

- ***Support Asset Creation.*** Gentrification often affects minority groups and immigrants disproportionately, especially populations that have lower incomes and less education. Increasing household earning capacity and building assets are ways to address a mismatch between wages and housing affordability, enabling longtime residents to continue to afford housing in the neighborhood. Community programs to promote education, employment attainment, skills development, and provide homeownership counseling and financial literacy education are opportunities to increase the resources of households and deter the risk of displacement. Local programs and initiatives that focus on these issues are NHCD's Housing Counseling and Down Payment Assistance programs, as well as the Financial Literacy Coalition of Central Texas and Bank on Central Texas. For more information about these programs and initiatives, see Appendix A: Asset Creation Programs and Initiatives.

- ***Coordinate City services to mitigate effects of potential displacement.*** While this plan identifies options for preserving and creating affordable housing in the Corridor, it also recognizes that privately-owned older market-rate multi-family complexes may continue to be redeveloped, as is already occurring in the area. For this reason, the City should continue to invest in programs to assist low- and moderate-income families throughout the city. The City recognizes the market-induced trend of people moving to outer areas to find affordable housing and should evaluate the placement of city social services, clinics, and other city services in relation to this trend.

Housing affordability is an integral component of the East Riverside Corridor plan. A key challenge relating to current and future revitalization in the East Riverside Corridor area is to identify strategies that maximize the benefits of the revitalization process while also minimizing adverse social and economic hardships for low- and moderate-income residents.

SECTION 8

IMPLEMENTATION

MAKING THE PLAN REAL
PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION
CATALYST PROJECTS/
INITIAL INVESTMENTS
ANTICIPATE INFRASTRUCTURE
IMPROVEMENTS & COMMUNITY NEEDS
FINANCIAL STRATEGIES & TOOLS

Making the Plan Real

The purpose of the East Riverside Corridor Plan is to articulate a vision and provide a framework to guide the future change, development, and City investment in the East Riverside Corridor Area. Adoption of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan will not automatically implement the vision articulated by the plan. It is only the first of many coordinated steps which will need to be taken over the years in order to realize the vision identified through the planning process. The implementation of this plan will help to create an area where a balanced mix of housing types for all income levels, commercial, retail, and employment uses support a more varied and sustainable transportation system including walking, bicycling, driving and transit use, potentially including a proposed streetcar/light rail line along East Riverside Drive. Successful implementation of the plan will require a strong partnership between the community, the City of Austin, other government agencies, and the private sector.

This section presents an overall strategy for implementing the East Riverside Corridor Plan. It articulates public and private actions needed to achieve the vision over time. The prioritization of action items should be viewed as a fluid and dynamic process; therefore, the priority of items may change over time as opportunities arise, circumstances change, and funding becomes available. Recommended actions and projects are presented below. The recommendations are intended to provide a "checklist" of a series of tasks that will move the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan from concept to reality.

Planning and Administration

The following describes recommended steps to establish the regulatory framework for the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan and mechanisms to encourage on-going implementation efforts.

Adopt the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan

The first important implementation step is for the Austin City Council to adopt the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan. Adoption of the Master Plan will signal to community members, property owners, business owners, the development community, City staff, and other stakeholders that the City Council embraces the vision outlined in the plan to encourage transformation of the existing single-use, auto-dependent pattern of development into a moderately higher density mixed-use neighborhood that is pedestrian-friendly and is supportive of potential future rail transit. The goal is to leverage private redevelopment that is already starting to occur to improve the area and create economic and societal opportunities for existing and nearby residents, while simultaneously welcoming new residents and businesses to the area. Adopting the Master Plan for the East Riverside Corridor is the starting point for realizing the vision expressed in the Master Plan. Once adopted, various City departments can move forward with integrating the Plan's recommendations into their departmental work plans.

Revise Land Development Regulations

In order to achieve the Master Plan's vision for a more walkable mixed-use neighborhood, it is recommended that zoning and development regulations be tailored for this special corridor. The intention is to create a development environment that will be supportive of the existing high level of bus service, and in anticipation of future rail transit along East Riverside. A "design-based" zoning ordinance similar to those used in other special planning areas such as the North Burnet/Gateway neighborhood and the Transit Oriented District Station Area Plans would allow a mix of land uses and density in accordance with the subdistricts envisioned in the plan and regulate such elements as the character of the street frontage, sidewalks, block sizes, building placement, height, and stepbacks to create human-scaled amenities and an environment that supports pedestrian, bicycle and transit use. The land use and density recommendations and design guidelines presented in the Master Plan (see Section 4 and 5) should be used as the basis for creating an area-wide Regulating Plan that will specifically allow and encourage the type of development envisioned in the Master Plan. The new urban design regulations would apply to new construction and redevelopment. Existing businesses would be "grandfathered" and would not be required to upgrade to the new urban design standards (buildings closer to the street, wider sidewalks, street tees, etc.) unless they submit development permit applications proposing redevelopment of their property. The Regulating Plan should be written in a way that is clear and understandable by property owners, the neighborhood, and the development community, with graphics illustrating key concepts.

Based on public feedback during the planning process, existing zoning overlay districts including the waterfront overlay, scenic roadway overlay and airport-related overlays should continue to apply when new regulations are developed.

Implement Interim Urban Design Regulations

New development regulations for the area will take some time for city staff to create, so it is recommended that some basic interim urban design regulations be put in place at the time of the Master Plan's adoption, in furtherance of Master Plan goals.

East Riverside Drive is currently designated as a Core Transit Corridor (CTC) from IH 35 to Pleasant Valley Road, but not further east. In order to ensure that the entire length of East Riverside Drive within the area of the Master Plan is required to meet consistent urban design standards, the portion of the drive from Pleasant Valley Road to SH 71 should also be designated as a Core Transit Corridor for application of standards in Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use. This will ensure that any development occurring along East Riverside Drive prior to the adoption of revised area-specific land development regulations will provide 15-foot sidewalks and place buildings closer to the street, creating a more pedestrian-oriented corridor.

Create a Development Bonus System

Based on the feedback received during the public planning process, a development bonus system should be developed in concert with changes to zoning and development regulations for the Corridor Area to help provide amenities in the area that might otherwise be difficult to fund such as additional open space. This system will ensure community benefits are received in exchange for allowing greater heights or densities.

Development bonuses are incentives that can be used both to shape the growth of the East Riverside Corridor and encourage developers to meet community goals. The East Riverside Corridor Plan supports a moderate increase in building height and density around proposed future transit Hubs surrounding primary transit stops as a means of alleviating sprawl, encouraging transit usage, and creating a vibrant district. Various stakeholders have identified other community goals or "public benefits" that are important to achieve as the East Riverside Corridor evolves over time, including: provision of well-maintained publicly accessible parks and open space; provision of pedestrian amenities and streetscaping; construction of bicycle facilities; and green building/sustainability. These public benefits were identified in the public planning as important for creating a sustainable, multi-modal, pedestrian-friendly area. Stakeholders have also identified other potential community benefits for inclusion in a development bonus program, including providing homeownership opportunities, providing office uses, and transit facilities. In addition, maintaining the current amount of affordable housing in the Area was identified as a priority through the planning process, and as such affordable housing should also be considered as a potential community benefit for development bonuses. A development bonus system could be used to assist in the provision of these community benefits by requiring developers to provide or contribute to these community benefits in exchange for increased development entitlements.

Amend Affected Neighborhood Plans When New Land Development Regulations are Adopted

The two neighborhood plans that overlap the East Riverside Corridor Area (East Riverside/Oltorf and Montopolis) should be amended to incorporate the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan when new land development regulations are adopted. The Neighborhood Plan future land use map (FLUM) designations should be amended as necessary to be consistent with the East Riverside Corridor Plan and regulations. When the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan is adopted, it will be the most recent guiding document and long-term planning tool for the area. However, the FLUM of the neighborhood plans will still control with respect to short-term zoning until the East Riverside Corridor land development regulations are created and adopted.

Engage the Private Sector in Redevelopment

Because most of the land in the Riverside Corridor is privately-owned, one of the keys to implementation of the East Riverside Corridor Plan vision is private sector economic investment and reinvestment in the area. The implementation strategy relative to private sector investment is to create the right regulatory environment that balances community benefits and incentives for private-sector development and redevelopment that result in the form of development envisioned in the plan. Redevelopment will not occur overnight. Although the desire to replace some of the large sprawling parking lots and strip mall development in the area with more human-scaled pedestrian-friendly development was expressed during the planning process, new development must generate enough revenue to make replacing the existing low-density, but revenue-generating strip malls worthwhile. The demand for new products (housing, retail, office, etc.) must exceed the current supply of these products. The demand for housing and associated stores and businesses is expected to increase in conjunction with the region's projected population growth. Furthermore, success of near-term catalyst projects, including the introduction of rail transit, should also increase demand for these uses and for the urban form of development and community amenities envisioned by the Master Plan.

Dedicate Staff to Implementation

City staff resources should be allocated for work on implementation of the East Riverside Corridor Plan. Duties could include:

- Facilitating the public input process and developing the design based regulations and development bonus system for the East Riverside Corridor Regulating Plan.

- Pursuing funding opportunities for implementation of the Master Plan recommendations and infrastructure improvements.
- Coordinating implementation projects with various city departments and agencies.
- Informing property owners about the East Riverside Corridor Plan and opportunities for development or redevelopment.
- Identifying property owners interested in development or redevelopment and facilitating information exchange between property owners regarding issues such as property assembly.
- Assisting with urban design review of development proposals submitted to the City.
- Communicating with the community about implementation progress.

Monitor Implementation Effectiveness

Staff should monitor the effectiveness of the implementation elements of this plan and recommend changes to them as appropriate. A review should occur at least annually with a summary report provided to the Planning Commission and City Council, and available to the public.

Catalyst Projects/Initial Investments

The term "Catalyst Project" refers to one or more high profile projects that can transform an area and translate the vision identified in the Master Plan into reality. A catalyst project can demonstrate commitment to realizing the plan; it provides a tangible example of the vision and encourages similar efforts on the part of other public and private entities.

A series of recommended initial catalyst projects for the East Riverside Corridor emerged during the visioning process. These specific investment opportunities have been identified due to their potential to spur additional investment and redevelopment. The timing of these investments is flexible, but the long-term success of the Master Plan may depend on strategic investments. The projects described below vary in type and scale and will likely require a variety of financing techniques, as well as cooperation with both the City of Austin and the private sector.

Implement Streetcar/Light Rail Transit Line and Primary Transit Stops

Public feedback ranked the installation of a light rail or street car line along the length of East Riverside Drive as a high priority for implementation of the Master Plan. Introduction of a fixed rail transit line is the most significant opportunity to reinvigorate and provide community benefits within the Corridor. The rail can increase mobility to, from and within the area and can foster redevelopment. The rail stations would be catalysts for the transit-oriented development envisioned for the area, particularly when combined with higher permitted densities around rail stations and lower minimum parking requirements.

The City of Austin should move forward with preliminary engineering and environmental studies to identify alignment, station location, right-of-way, potential pedestrian and bicycle improvements, potential environmental issues and refined cost estimates for the proposed rail project.

Improve pedestrian crossings of Riverside Drive

Improving pedestrians' ability to cross East Riverside Drive safely and conveniently will enhance the vision of East Riverside Drive as a unified corridor. The addition of traffic signals, improved crosswalks and pedestrian crossing signage would signal the City's commitment to facilitating the creation of a pedestrian-friendly, walkable corridor.

Installation of bicycle lanes along East Riverside Drive

A bicycle network for the Corridor was identified as a priority by the community. Clearly visible bicycle lanes along both sides of East Riverside Drive would contribute to the regional bicycle network and are essential for the transformation of the current auto-dominated roadway into a multi-modal street.

Continue to Implement Country Club Creek Trail Plan

Completion of the Country Club Creek hike and bike trail, including an underpass at Riverside Drive, would be a simple way to begin to create a series of green connections from surrounding neighborhoods, through the Corridor to the regional parkland and trails along Lady Bird Lake.

Targeted public and private improvements within the development Hubs

Focusing initial improvements at the Hubs around potential future transit stops creates efficiencies and synergy between projects to create positive change. In many cases, these areas were identified as susceptible

to change during the public visioning process and serve strategic urban design purposes as they are located near key intersections and potential rail stops. Economic and practical concerns also influenced the selection of these sites. Development at these prominent locations can spur additional investment while facilitating and supporting the implementation of a light rail or streetcar system and other community goals throughout the corridor. Some key improvements may include:

- Providing tree-lined/covered wide sidewalks starting in hubs, either in concert with private development or coordinated with construction of the rail line.
- Encouraging strategic private development projects that could serve as a model for the type of urban form, desired commercial uses, and community amenities envisioned by the plan (e.g. a farmer's market in the Lakeshore Hub, or an urban-style grocery store with office or residential uses also on the site, potentially with structured parking, or a small urban pocket park created in concert with new development.)
- Providing public art, landscaping or special benches or lighting to enhance and distinguish the Hubs.
- Private development of commercial space on the ground floor of mixed use buildings to support retail activity and create interest at the pedestrian level.
- Development of landmark and gateway features to create a neighborhood focal point for community and commercial activity.

Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza & Development

The intersection of E. Riverside Drive and S. Pleasant Valley Road is a key location within the corridor. Pleasant Valley Road is the major north-south arterial within the planning area, and the intersection is unique due to the extremely wide median that was originally designed to accommodate an interchange of a major freeway. The Master Plan identifies the opportunity to create new developable parcels if East Riverside Drive is realigned so that all traffic lanes are shifted to the south side of the existing median at this intersection. The potential development of City-owned land in the existing median, if utility, slope and drainage obstacles can be overcome, could embody many elements of the East Riverside Corridor vision and provide a good example of a well-designed transit-oriented development that includes community gathering spaces, employment opportunities and housing affordable to a mix of incomes. The development of public plaza space and amenities with improved interface of transit modes in combination with this realignment would transform this area and provide new opportunities for local and subregional commercial activity. The creation of a market in the Pleasant Valley Transit Plaza could provide a space for small retailers to benefit from large numbers of pedestrians in the area.

Reduce Crime in the East Riverside Corridor Area

Throughout the planning process, crime was raised as a concern by business owners, property owners and surrounding neighborhood residents. Crime, both real and perceived, was highlighted by potential developers as a limitation on future investment in the area. Although not a typical "catalyst project," the reduction of crime would have a significant positive effect on redevelopment and revitalization of the Corridor area.

In some cases, redevelopment itself will help reduce crime, by removing buildings in disrepair that have become locations of criminal activity. Housing that is integrated with the neighborhood, rather than fenced off from it, can provide more security though greater connections to streets and public spaces. Through design standards regulating building placement, the plan encourages housing that is connected to the neighborhood and public streets, rather than walled off from them. New design standards bringing buildings up to the street and improving the pedestrian environment would provide more "eyes on the street," which could reduce criminal activity as well. However, in some areas of the Corridor, where there is currently a higher frequency of incidents, crime needs to be addressed before significant redevelopment will occur.

Anticipate Infrastructure Improvements and Community Needs

In addition to the catalyst projects listed above, a number of infrastructure improvements and community facilities are recommended in the Corridor Plan. Implementation of these improvements will necessitate coordination with various City departments and regional and state agencies, and in some cases, regulatory or policy changes to ensure adequate funding.

Responsible City of Austin Departments should coordinate when developing long-term Capital Improvement Project (CIP) plans to provide infrastructure upgrades and community facilities necessary to implement the vision described in the Master Plan. Major infrastructure projects (street, stormwater, water, wastewater, electric, streetscape and rail) should be planned, designed and constructed in a coordinated and comprehensive manner to minimize disturbance to area residents and businesses, reduce overall costs and maximize benefits to the corridor and the larger community. For example, if the proposed rail line moves forward, utility improvements should be coordinated and included in the funding for the redesign of East Riverside Drive. In addition, if designed appropriately, civic facilities such as libraries, parks, stormwater management facilities, etc. could be co-located to improve efficiencies and manage costs. Dedicated implementation staff could assist in the coordination of these efforts.

Interconnecting Streets

Providing interconnecting streets as the area redevelops is important to disperse traffic and allow for more direct pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connections. The City Design Standards require properties that are five-acres or larger to create internal blocks with connecting streets or driveways. However, at present, there are some large stretches of undivided land with multiple property owners that may not be required to create internal blocks or to provide a connecting street network under existing regulations.

It is recommended that City staff create an East Riverside Collector Plan to be adopted by City Council. This plan would require new development and redevelopment to provide right-of-way and to construct collector streets shown in the East Riverside Collector Plan. These requirements could potentially be incentivized through development bonus programs.

Sidewalks/Streetscape

A key element of the vision for the future of the East Riverside Corridor area is the creation of high-quality pedestrian environments along East Riverside Drive and in the rest of the planning area. Implementing these streetscape improvements is contingent upon both private-sector investments through development and redevelopment, and public sector capital improvements, requiring a long-term commitment to fully realize.

Enhanced streetscape standards are necessary to ensure new development improves the aesthetics and function of sidewalks, street trees and other pedestrian amenities for all users. Standards should be created based on the design guidelines outlined in the Master Plan, applicable to different street types, and modeled on streetscape standards defined in the Land Development Code Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use, the North Burnet/Gateway Master Plan, and the Station Area Plans.

If the proposed rail project moves forward, coordinated improvements to the streetscape should be included as part of the funding for the redesign of East Riverside Drive. Wide sidewalks in good condition that allow for safe and comfortable pedestrian access to and from the transit stops are imperative for a successful transit line.

Improve Existing Boulevards and Build New

In order to add additional green space to the area, make roadways more pedestrian friendly, and to connect open space and parks in the area, the East Riverside Corridor Plan recommends adding new boulevards in some locations and altering existing streets to become boulevards in other locations. (See Exhibit 3.2) Boulevard construction could be implemented in conjunction with road reconstruction. A special funding source would be necessary because boulevards are not typical roadway reconstruction. On roadways in primarily residential areas, it might be possible to look for grant opportunities to help pay for boulevard construction.

Bicycle Facilities

Bicycle facilities are recommended on several existing roadways. These improvements are needed to ensure safe bicycle travel in the area. Bicycle facilities on existing roadways are typically funded through grants or City General Obligation Bonds. In addition, the City could solicit federal funds from CAMPO for pedestrian and bicycle improvements on existing roads. All new collector streets should be designed to accommodate bicycle facilities.

Utilities

An analysis of the water and wastewater infrastructure in the East Riverside corridor identified a number of potential limitations in the current system. Typically developers pay for water and wastewater service extension to and within their developments, while the City pays for main line upgrades to the transmission

system as needed, funded by rate revenues. The analysis conducted as part of this planning process provides an initial indicator to Austin Water Utility (AWU) of upgrades to include in their long-range planning. AWU also monitors development service extension requests to evaluate the extent and timing of development within sectors of Austin, to inform their CIP Spending Plan. As the area continues to develop over time, the CIP Spending Plan will need evaluation and adjustment.

Reclaimed water master plans call for reclaimed water mains along E. Riverside Drive and S. Pleasant Valley Road. To support this network of mains, an elevated storage tank will be needed on high ground south of East Riverside Drive. The City should continue with plans to bring reclaimed water to the Riverside area and provide information to future developers about the ability to tap into the system.

As described in Section 6 Infrastructure, the City should identify improvements needed to storm drains to more closely meet current standards and then partner with private development to upgrade the drainage system infrastructure as redevelopment occurs. Improvements to address existing flooding should be included in the CIP budgeting process. The City should also evaluate opportunities for additional regional detention and water quality facilities, including partnering with private development to oversize detention ponds.

Parks and Open Space Development

The addition of parks and open space is a high priority for the Corridor. This includes creating new open space and neighborhood parks, providing linkages to the lake, hike and bike trail, and regional parks, and creating combined facilities with new parks and shallow detention for stormwater management. Typically new parks are funded through General Obligation Bonds and by Parkland Dedication Ordinance requirements. Endowments should be created for newly acquired parkland or open space to assure adequate resources to fund planning and construction and to perpetually endow operations and maintenance. Other mechanisms to create open space in the area are City Design Standards requirements for private common open space. A development bonus could provide an incentive for new development to provide additional land or revenues for parkland.

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) should look for parkland acquisition opportunities, especially south of East Riverside Drive which has less access to existing neighborhood and regional parks. PARD staff should also be formally integrated into the development review process of all subdivision and site plan applications that fall within the boundaries of the East Riverside Corridor Area so that open space opportunities may be analyzed and explored early on in the project development stage.

The City should develop open space standards that regulate the design and provision of open space on-site through the creation of the Regulating Plan for the Area. As much as possible, parkland dedication requirements and private common open space requirements should be fulfilled on-site in the form of well-designed pocket and/or linear parks, trails, and plazas within a 5-minute walk of residential properties. Project open space requirements could potentially be met through public access easements for trails connecting to Lady Bird Lake or other neighborhood or regional parks and open space. If it is either impossible or unrealistic that parkland be provided on-site, parkland dedication fees generated in the area are recommended to be spent in the immediate vicinity.

Schools and Community Facilities

Additional civic facilities may be needed in the future to serve the increased residential and employment population in the area, potentially including police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS) stations, and schools. Expansion of community services are typically funded by property and sales tax revenue. However, some of the costs associated with land acquisition, facility construction, staff hiring and training may have to be funded before significant increases in tax revenues have been realized. As redevelopment increases in the area, so will attendant property and sales tax revenue. Facility locations should be determined by the appropriate department or school district based on community needs, resources and plans. From a cost perspective, acquisition of civic sites in the early stages of plan implementation could provide greater flexibility in site selection and lower land costs. Various departments and agencies participated in the creation and review of this plan, and should continue to monitor the needs in the area as it redevelops and look for opportunities. Facilities should be built in an urban form, in concert with the Master Plan design guidelines. In addition, existing community facilities need to be maintained and upgraded to prepare for and accommodate greater use that may result from an increasing number of people living and working in the area.

Austin Fire Department Expected Future Service Needs

Successful implementation of the proposed plan would increase the population and activity levels in the plan area. This will increase the number of incidents requiring fire protection and emergency service response and that will require additional Fire Department resources and/or facilities.

The current population and activity levels along and adjacent to the East Riverside Corridor area have generated so much incident activity that the Austin Fire Department determined it was necessary to locate a second engine company at Station 22, which is located near the corner of East Riverside Drive and Faro Drive. Engine 22 and Engine 35 have responded to more than 2,300 incidents in the first seven months of 2009 and are expected to exceed a total of 4,000 incident responses by the end of the year.

Although a full and successful implementation of the E. Riverside Corridor Master Plan would result in increased property and sales tax revenues, no analysis has been conducted to determine what percentage of the funding required for additional facilities and staffing could be provided via the increased tax revenues. Some of the costs associated with land acquisition, facility construction, staff hiring and training may have to be funded before significant increases in tax revenues have been realized.

Fire Department Recommendations:

1. AFD Station 22 now houses two Engine companies with 8 personnel and an EMS unit with 2 personnel. The station has limited living space and inadequate locker room facilities to support this level of staffing.

Expansion of the Station 22 facilities should, ideally, occur prior to significant development or redevelopment, but the most efficient expansion of the existing facilities could involve a stand alone EMS facility. That configuration would require utilization of the entire site and relocation of the facility currently located on the southernmost portion of the site.

2. Acquire a Fire/EMS Station site closer to the intersection of E. Riverside Drive and IH 35. The site should be acquired a minimum of three years prior to the projected operational date of the Station. From a cost perspective, acquisition of the site in the early stages of plan implementation should provide greater flexibility in site selection and lower land costs.

The Stations located to the north and west (1, 6 and 7) of the East Riverside Corridor area have high incident counts which will only increase in the future. The Stations located to the south and east (15, 24, 35 and 42) of the East Riverside Corridor area do not currently have the same level of incident counts, but the expectation is that future growth and annexations will significantly increase service demand for those Stations as well.

The new station would become the primary first-in responder to the northernmost portion of the East Riverside Corridor area, and along with the units at Station 22 will provide additional response resources to all of the adjacent station areas that will also be experiencing increased service demands.

3. AFD and other public safety facilities may request Alternative Equivalent Compliance to specific Corridor design guidelines as necessary for the provision of emergency services.

Affordable Housing

Maintaining affordable housing in the East Riverside Corridor will be a challenge, as Austin continues to grow and the demand for housing in Austin's urban core increases, driving up the cost of land. A development bonus could provide an incentive for new development to provide affordable housing or contribute funds to an affordable housing trust fund. The City should also continue to administer programs and incentives to assist in the retention and development of affordable housing. In addition, the City should continue to explore opportunities for preservation of existing low-income rental housing in the corridor. It will also be important to create zoning regulations that allow the development of attached housing (duplex/condos/townhomes) to increase the supply of these affordable homeownership options. This issue is discussed in greater detail in the Affordable Housing section of the Master Plan.

Maintaining Improvements

In order for the area to preserve its value following improvements and investment, those improvements must be well managed and maintained. This may require higher level of maintenance than traditionally provided by the City, necessitating the use of both public and private resources. Appropriate City departments should update their budget requests, staffing patterns, and equipment orders based on area improvements. Second, the City should promote the development of a public improvement district, or similar quasi-governmental organization, to provide service levels above that which the various City agencies are able to provide. The City and business owners should work together to identify other potential public/private partnerships to fund the maintenance of improvements.

Financial Strategies & Tools

The actions listed above are intended to implement the East Riverside Corridor Vision. It will take a variety of financing mechanisms and involvement from both the private and public sector to complete the various projects. There are several tools the City may employ to finance the implementation actions outlined in this document:

- Private development requirements/responsibilities
- Development bonuses
- Public Improvement Districts
- Public/Private partnerships
- General Fund
- General Obligation Bonds
- Utility Rate Revenues
- Federal/State Grants
- Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Bonds
- Parking Meter Revenues

Private Sector Investment

Private sector redevelopment and reinvestment in the area is a key component of realizing the vision for the East Riverside Corridor. One of the most efficient means, from a taxpayer standpoint, to achieve the physical urban design goals outlined in the plan is to require or encourage developers to make site specific improvements in accordance with the physical guidelines without financial assistance from the City. This could be achieved by revising the land development regulations and/or creating a development bonus structure as a mechanism for achieving public benefits.

Private development also typically pays for infrastructure improvements to and within their site, including water, wastewater, drainage, and roadways. The City may fund water and wastewater upgrades in concert with private development infrastructure improvements as needed to support cumulative development needs in the area. Private development will also contribute to parks, open space and other amenities in the area through existing parkland dedication and private common open space requirements. Funds generated from parkland dedication fee-in-lieu payments must be spent within one mile of the development that paid the fee. Thus, as more development occurs in the area, additional funding for parks will be generated, or parks will be provided on site as part of the development.

Property owners in the Corridor area that are interested in seeing various aspects of the Corridor Plan come to fruition in a faster or more coordinated way than would occur through various public funding processes, may also choose to identify sources of private funding to accomplish certain projects. One option is for property owners to organize a Public Improvement District (PID). A PID is a quasi-governmental authority with special assessment powers. In a PID, property owners choose to levy an additional assessment on themselves, to fund very specific projects in the area. This requires a simple majority of landowners by both value and area. Typically the projects chosen are those that property owners feel would enhance the value of their properties in the long-run, and the assessment may vary by proximity to a particular amenity. A PID may be used for ongoing operating requirements, such as managing the streetscapes, plantings, special lighting, signage, marketing efforts, or general maintenance at a higher level than would typically be maintained by the City.

The private sector may also enter into public/private partnerships to meet community goals. Partnerships could include private maintenance of publicly-accessible parkland, private development on leased publicly-owned land, public subsidy of affordable housing units within a private development project, the oversizing of detention ponds for shared use, or numerous other coordinated efforts between the public and private sector.

The neighborhood or property owners could also seek funding available from other outside sources such as other government or private grant opportunities to supplement the City's public investment in the area. Grants could support the provision of trails, landscaping and boulevards, community gardens, tree-plantings, or public art, among other opportunities.

Public Sector Investment

Local government has the ability to make limited but targeted public investments that may leverage much larger private investments. A number of implementation items outlined in the preceding sections could fall within the purview of a government agency to enact. For some elements, such as new community facilities like police stations and schools, and water and wastewater utility upgrades, there are already City or school district procedures and budgeting processes in place, and this plan simply helps clarify and prioritize the community's needs for the responsible departments so that they can include it in their work program. For other elements, different financing mechanisms may need to be employed by the public sector to make the vision a reality.

Central to the vision of the Corridor Plan is the construction of a rail line along Riverside Drive. In other cities, the introduction of a fixed rail line has spurred additional development alongside it. The City of Austin and other regional agencies have presented the proposed Austin Urban Rail project, which includes the Riverside Drive rail, to the CAMPO Transit Working Group (TWG). The TWG has recommended that the Urban Rail

project develop more detailed information regarding the alignment, operation and cost of the project. The City of Austin anticipates moving forward with preliminary engineering and environmental studies to refine this information and continue gathering public input on the proposed rail project. One aspect of this Corridor Master Plan is to leverage the future transit investment by encouraging supportive development surrounding the transit stops. The additional development can then contribute to funding public infrastructure needs in the area, including the investment in rail itself, through the increased property taxes, sales taxes, and employment opportunities likely to be generated by the new development.

A number of the public investments suggested for the area could be funded through typical City processes establishing priorities for City General Fund or Capital Improvement Program funds. These include bicycle facilities, trails, roadway connections, pedestrian crossings, and community facilities. However, because these projects must compete with other priority projects in the city through the typical budgeting processes, it is recommended that the City also consider other funding tools to fund some initial investment catalyst projects and other high priority implementation actions.

The City is strongly encouraged to seek Federal funding sources in implementing the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan and rail initiative.

In terms of key capital expenditures that could facilitate private investment in the area, tax increment financing (TIF) should also be considered as a funding mechanism. Tax increment financing draws upon the increase in area retail sales taxes and property values as a revenue source for key public investments in the area. It is also sensitive to the timing in which the retail sale growth and property values increase. As such, given the nature of the sources upon which TIFs draw, it is most readily matched to projects with large payoffs, such as the rail initiative, redesign of East Riverside Drive, streetscape improvements, and a transit plaza. TIF sources may also be used judiciously in lieu of general obligation debt for items such as wastewater system improvements. Because TIFs divert tax revenue to a specific area instead of the City's General Fund, it is most appropriately used when the projects funded by a TIF are needed to spur initial development that would not otherwise occur and will be catalysts for additional private development and investment that will contribute additional future tax revenue to the city at large.

No single financing method or source will provide the resources necessary to implement all aspects of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan. Implementation will occur incrementally as funding opportunities arise and with ongoing community involvement, with the Master Plan serving as a guide.

APPENDIX A

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Introduction

This Existing Conditions portion of the Master Plan is intended to provide a snapshot of the East Riverside Corridor today. This section is a compilation of data and information collected from a variety of sources, and serves as the foundation for visioning and planning efforts undertaken for the East Riverside Corridor. The purpose of this section is to document the existing conditions of the Study Area, including demographics for the area at present; future demographic trends; school information; health and human services information; small business assistance programs; topographic and natural features; land uses patterns; transportation networks; utilities; and development regulations. The study area boundaries shown on the maps in this section represent the original boundary, which was modified based on public input.

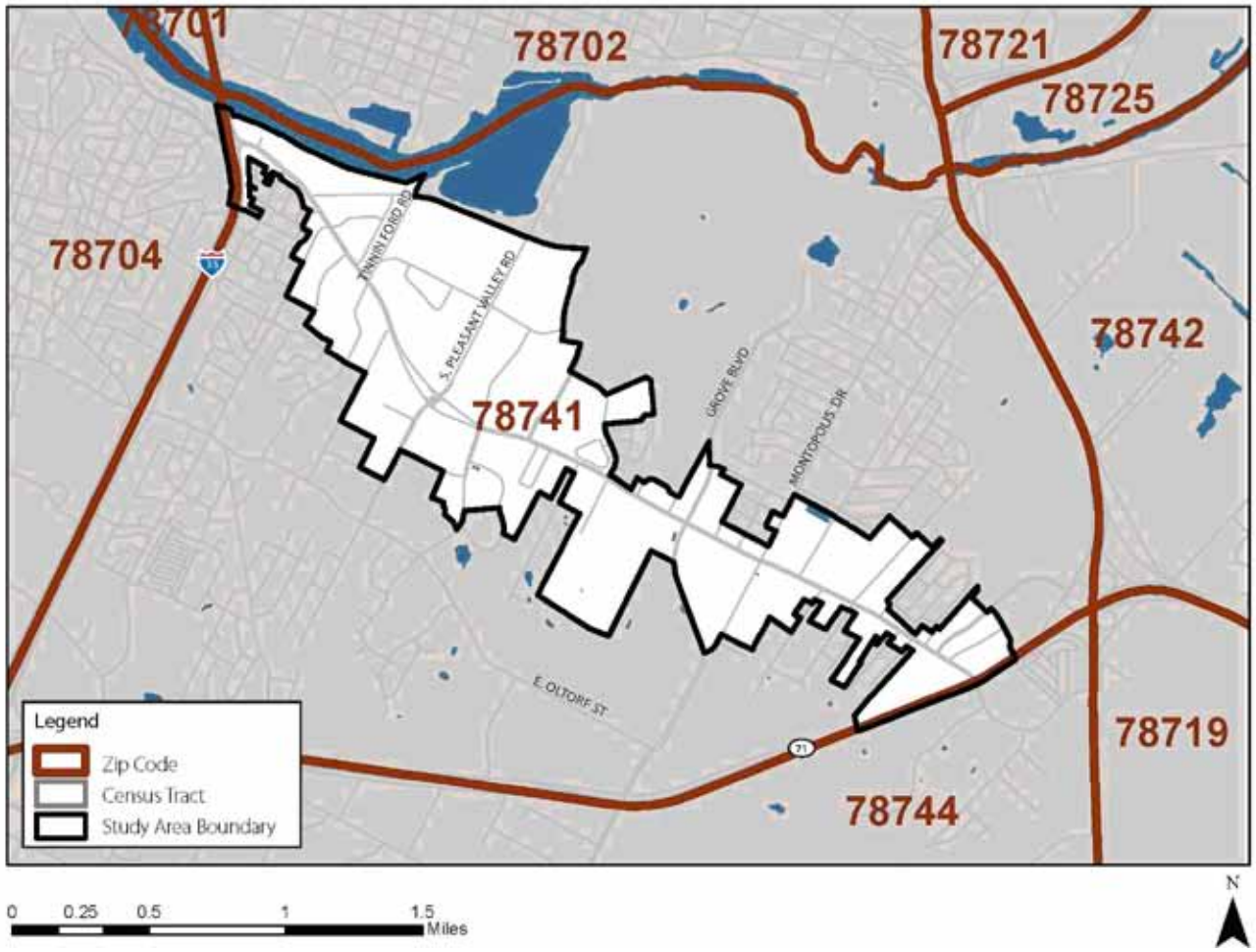
Exhibit A.1:
Study Area Aerial Map

(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

East Riverside Corridor Planning Area Demographics

The East Riverside Corridor planning area is defined as the area between I-35, on the West, and Hwy 71/Ben White, on the East, generally including non-single-family residential properties within a ¼ mile to a ½ mile to the north and south of Riverside Drive. The study area is shown in Exhibit A.2, as are the containing and nearby zip code areas.

Exhibit A.2:
Zip Code Map

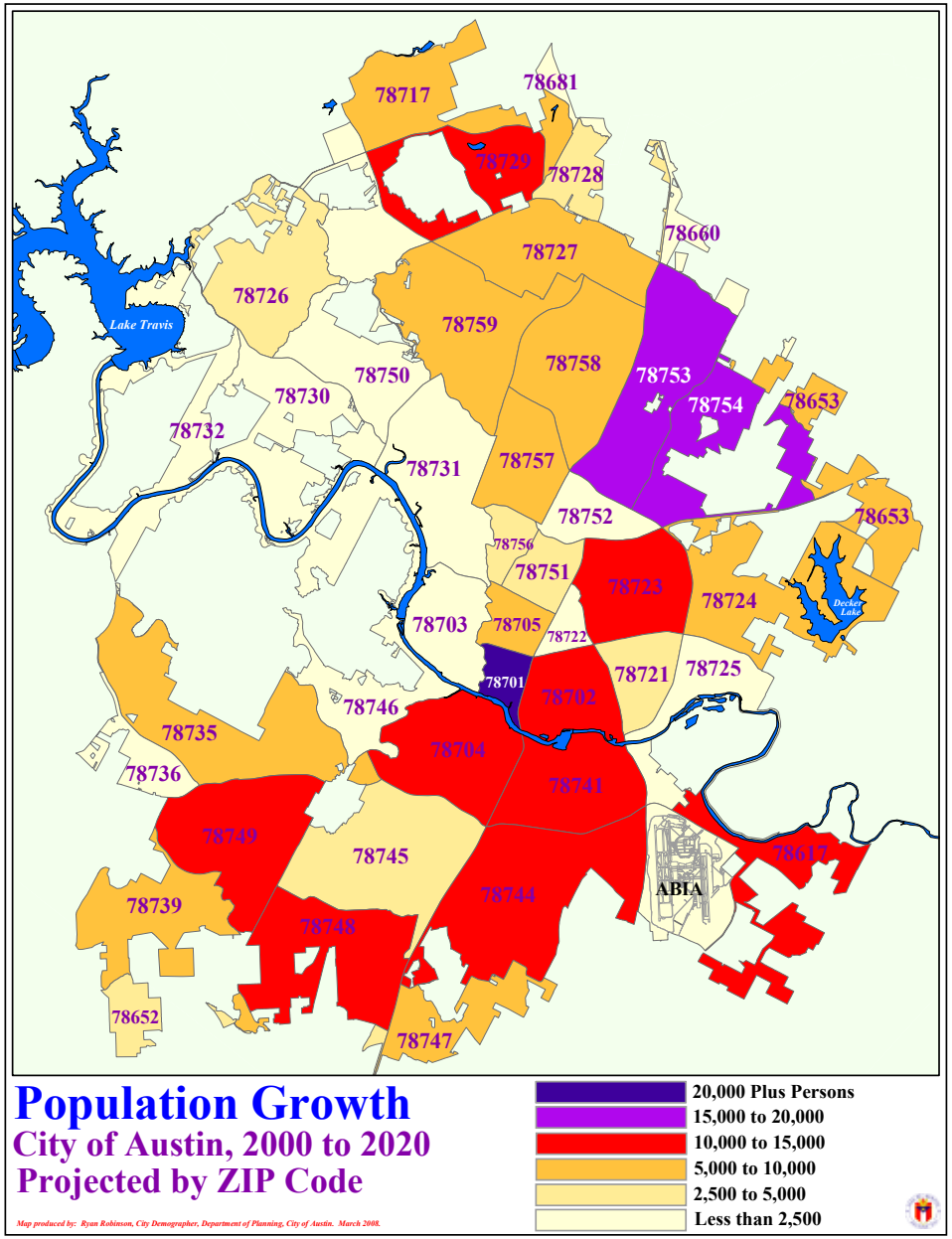


(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

While it is important to bound the scope of some studies to the precise physical environment, relevant social and economic conditions extend beyond the East Riverside Corridor boundary. As such, where pertinent, the existing social and economic attributes are presented at the metropolitan, city, submarket, zip code, Census tract aggregation, and East Riverside Corridor level.

The Austin-Round Rock metropolitan statistical area (MSA), the City of Austin, and the East Riverside Corridor all encountered population growth since the year 2000, and are expected to continue to grow. This growth exists in spite of economic difficulties the city experienced following the downturn in information and technology sectors in the early part of the decade and the more recent downturn in the economy. Exhibit A.3 notes projected population growth for Austin-area zip codes through 2020.

Exhibit A.3:
City of Austin Population Growth Map



As shown in Exhibit A.4, the zip code containing the East Riverside Corridor, 78741, grew at a more rapid rate since 2000 than the City as a whole, though it substantially lagged the greater metro area. As shown in Exhibit A.2, the 78741 zip code area is larger than the ERC area and reflects growth in both the ERC area and the rest of the zip code area. This shows that there is a potential demand for housing within and adjacent to the East Riverside Corridor area.

The 2.2% annualized growth rate in the 78741 Zip Code indicates that, if maintained, the population in the study area and immediately adjacent to the study area would double in 32 years. This is faster than the city as a whole, which would require an additional 11 years to double its population, maintaining the same growth rate. This suggests that the ERC possesses a locational advantage for future population growth over other portions of Austin.

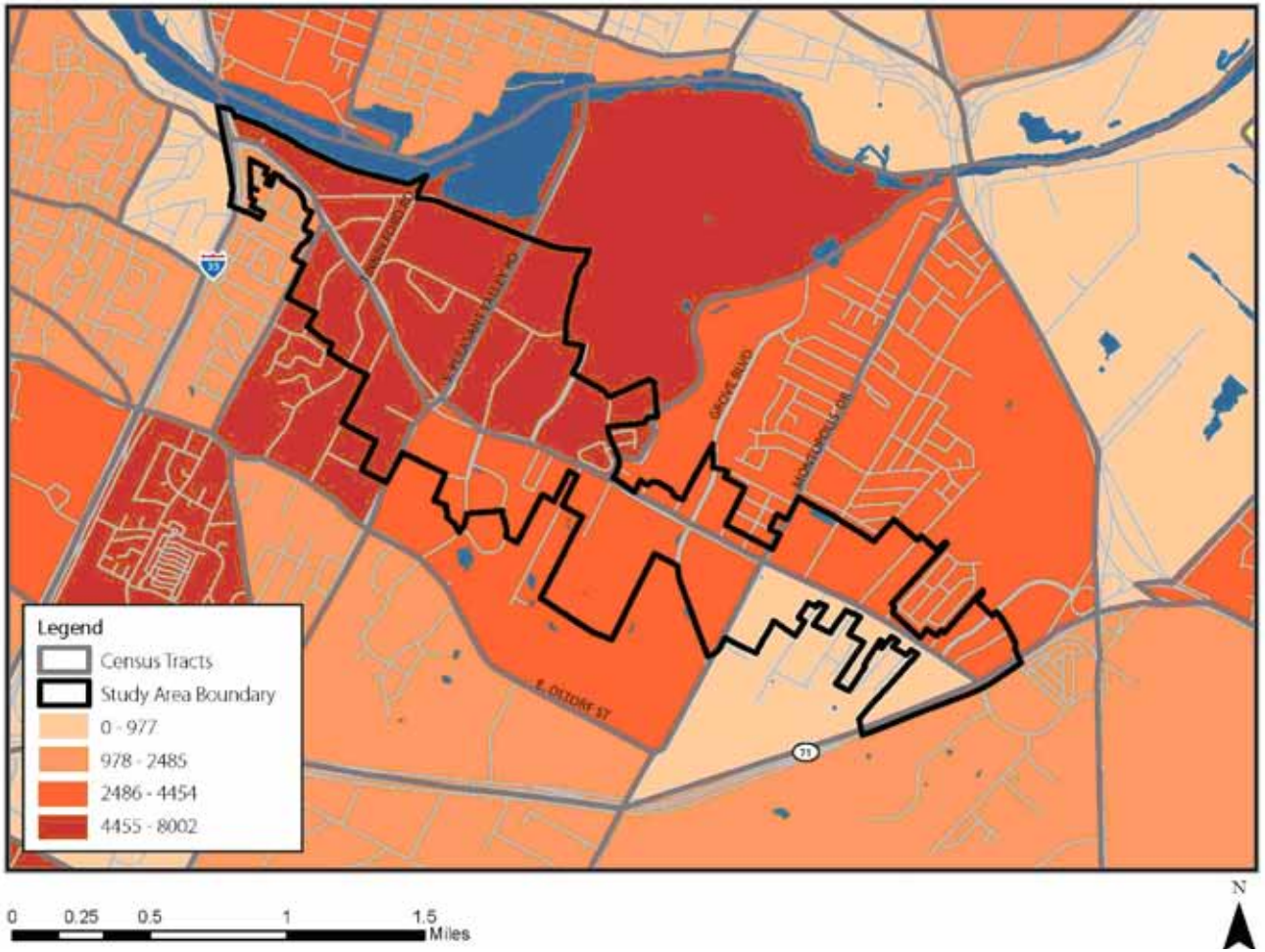
Exhibit A.4:
Basic Population and Household Characteristics

Population				
	2000	**2007/2008**	**Pct. Change**	**Annual Rate**
Zip Code 78741	40,671	48,535	19.3%	2.23%
City of Austin	656,562	749,659	14.2%	1.67%
Austin MSA	1,249,763	1,593,400	27.5%	3.08%
Households				
	2000	**2007/2008**	**Pct. Change**	**Annual Rate**
Zip Code 78741	17,083	20,436	19.6%	2.27%
City of Austin	265,649	306,693	15.5%	1.81%
Austin MSA	471,855	583,598	23.7%	2.69%
Average Household Size				
	2000	**2007/2008**	**Pct. Change**	**Annual Rate**
Zip Code 78741	2.38	2.37	-0.2%	-0.03%
City of Austin	2.47	2.44	-1.1%	-0.14%
Austin MSA	2.65	2.73	3.1%	0.38%

Source: Census, Claritas, and ANA

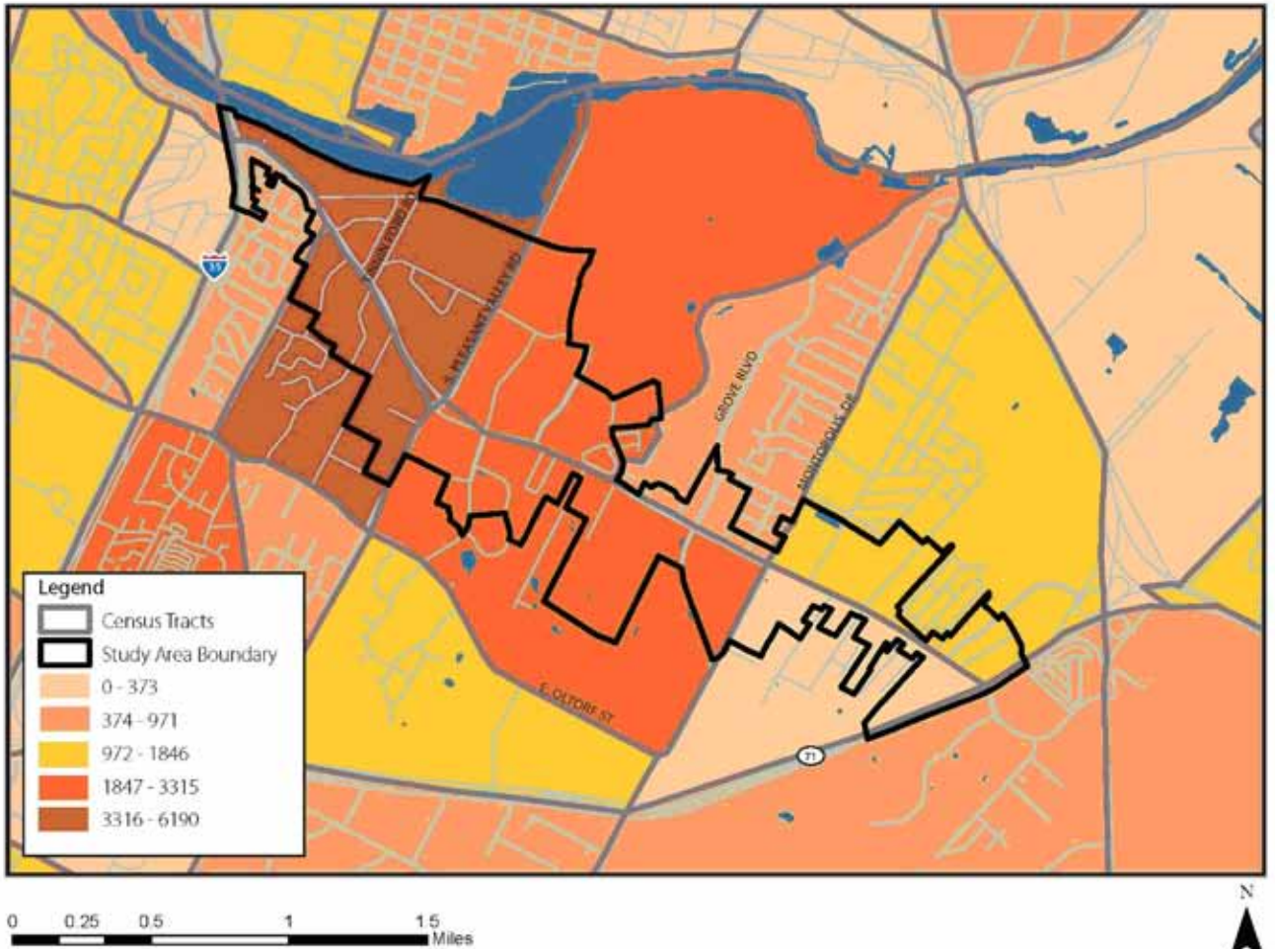
The distribution of the population and households along and adjacent to the East Riverside Corridor is illustrated in Exhibits A.5 and A.6. The majority of the population is found between Crossing Place and I-35, North of East Riverside Drive, and South Pleasant Valley Road and I-35 to the South of East Riverside Drive. Nonetheless, substantial population growth occurred between 2000 and 2008 along Montopolis Drive, North of East Riverside Drive, and to the Northwest of Hwy 71.

Exhibit A.5:
Population by Census Tract, 2000



Source: Census, City of Austin, and ANA

Exhibit A.6:
Number of Households by Census Tract, 2000



Source: Census, City of Austin, and ANA

The population pattern and trend, when analyzed with respect to race and ethnicity, reflect citywide trends. The Hispanic population in and adjacent to the East Riverside Corridor grew by almost 7,000 people, or 32%, between 2000 and 2008, as shown in Exhibit A.7. Further, the Hispanic population comprises the majority of the population in the study area, at 57.1%. The population identifying themselves as Black or African American comprises the second largest racial group. Nonetheless, it is the only group of significant size losing an absolute number of people in the area.

Existing demographic trends suggest that the population in the East Riverside Corridor is likely to continue to grow primarily through continued growth in the Hispanic population. Secondarily, the non-Hispanic White and Asian populations are likely to be the source of growth due to migration into the Corridor. Demographic trends indicate that moving forward, even without public investment in infrastructure and aesthetic amenities, the East Riverside Corridor will grow by virtue of natural increase, particularly to the South of East Riverside Drive, and by migration. Migration is likely to be a key element of growth, absent public specific public investment in amenities and services, particularly to the Southeast, between Montopolis and Hwy 71.

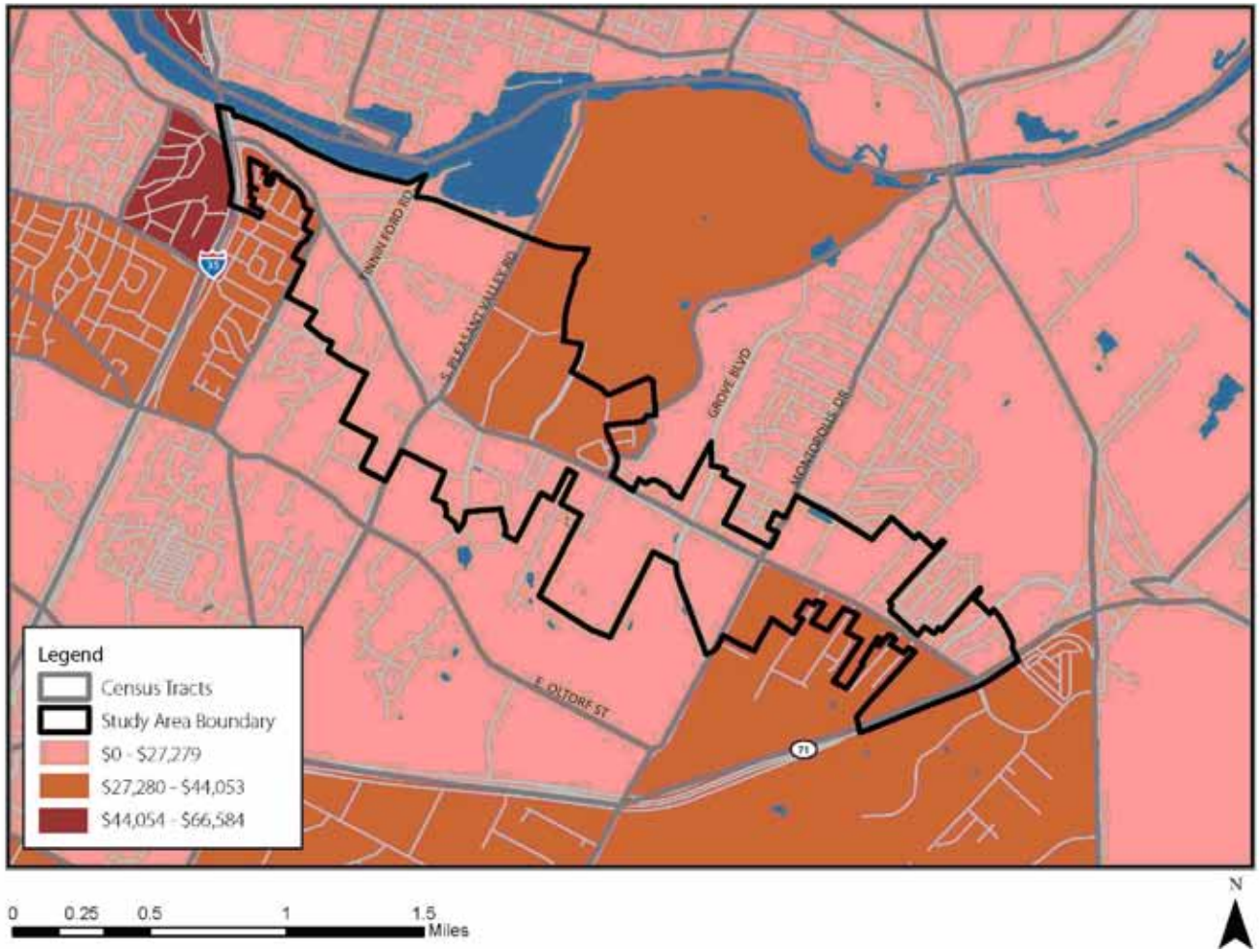
Exhibit A.7:
Race and Ethnicity in Zip Code 78741, 2000

Population		**2000**	**2008**
Hispanic		20,972	27,716
Non-Hispanic		19,699	20,819
	White Alone	12,901	13,300
	Black or African American Alone	3,415	3,365
	American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	110	154
	Asian Alone	2,351	2,949
	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	30	35
	Some Other Race Alone	76	50
	Two or More Races	816	966
Total		40,671	48,535
Share of the Total Population			
Hispanic		51.6%	57.1%
Non-Hispanic		48.4%	42.9%
	White Alone	31.7%	27.4%
	Black or African American Alone	8.4%	6.9%
	American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	0.3%	0.3%
	Asian Alone	5.8%	6.1%
	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	0.1%	0.1%
	Some Other Race Alone	0.2%	0.1%
	Two or More Races	2.0%	2.0%
Percent Change in Population			
Hispanic		32.2%	
Non-Hispanic		5.7%	
	White Alone	3.1%	
	Black or African American Alone	-1.5%	
	American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	40.0%	
	Asian Alone	25.4%	
	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	16.7%	
	Some Other Race Alone	-34.2%	
	Two or More Races	18.4%	

Source: Census, ANA

The median personal income throughout most of the study area is below that of the City of Austin as a whole. The median income for an individual, in 2007, by census tract, was just over $21,000, while for the city as a whole the median income in 2007 was greater than $27,000, according to City of Austin GIS data. Nevertheless, this is not to imply homogeneity across the study area. Residents northeast of Pleasant Valley Road fare the best with a median income of over $40,000. Similarly, those in the southeastern most portion of the study area, near the eastern border of the Corridor, have a median income better than that for the City as a whole. Those to the south of East Riverside Drive and adjacent to Pleasant Valley have the most modest incomes.

Exhibit A.8:
Median Personal Income by Census Tract, 2007



Source: Census, City of Austin, ANA

For the study area as a whole, the per capita income has grown at an annualized rate of about a half a percent per year. This slow growth rate masks the fact that incomes across the City actually fell on a per capita basis during the last economic downturn and have only recently approximated previous peaks. As such, even this modest growth rate generally reflects the higher incomes associated with some new residents moving into the area.

Household level statistics illustrate the juxtaposition of relative poverty to wealth in the area, as shown in Exhibit A.9. In 2008, nearly a third of households had a total income below $15,000 per annum. Forty-seven percent of households have incomes less than $25,000 per annum. While there exists a sizeable student-aged population, that still leaves somewhere on the order of 10% of households below $15,000 per annum. So, while the median income figures do not illustrate some of the difficult circumstances existing in the study area, the household numbers do.

These findings demonstrate the range that exists from one end of the East Riverside Corridor to the other. It also reflects the fact that there is a wide range and mix of ages of housing stock in the area. Finally, it illustrates cause for concern that there is not sufficient housing to meet demand.

The economic condition in which the East Riverside Corridor exists is a precarious one. There are a number of assets, and they are increasing. The potential future light rail or streetcar line, spillover from Downtown, and the airport located to the Southeast provides strong assets off of which to grow. Further, even in the absence of public investment, private investment is moving into the area. Concerns have been raised in regards to how

Exhibit A.9:
Household Income Structure in Zip Code 78741, 2008

Household Income Trends	**2000**	**2008**
Total Household Income - Households	17,121	20,436
Income Less than $15,000	5,235	6,163
Income $15,000 - $24,999	3,203	3,504
Income $25,000 - $34,999	2,882	3,265
Income $35,000 - $49,999	2,724	3,474
Income $50,000 - $74,999	2,068	2,528
Income $75,000 - $99,999	621	831
Income $100,000 - $149,999	257	508
Income $150,000 - $249,999	101	108
Income $250,000 - $499,999	27	47
Income $500,000 or more	3	8
Total Household Income - Share of Households		
Income Less than $15,000	31%	30%
Income $15,000 - $24,999	19%	17%
Income $25,000 - $34,999	17%	16%
Income $35,000 - $49,999	16%	17%
Income $50,000 - $74,999	12%	12%
Income $75,000 - $99,999	4%	4%
Income $100,000 - $149,999	2%	2%
Income $150,000 - $249,999	1%	1%
Income $250,000 - $499,999	0%	0%
Income $500,000 or more	0%	0%
Total Household Income - Annualized Growth in Number of Housesholds		
Income Less than $15,000	2.1%	
Income $15,000 - $24,999	1.1%	
Income $25,000 - $34,999	1.6%	
Income $35,000 - $49,999	3.1%	
Income $50,000 - $74,999	2.5%	
Income $75,000 - $99,999	3.7%	
Income $100,000 - $149,999	8.9%	
Income $150,000 - $249,999	0.8%	
Income $250,000 - $499,999	7.2%	
Income $500,000 or more	13.0%	

Source: Claritas, ANA

new development will affect low-income residents from an economic standpoint.

Given the Corridor's location, residents on and adjacent to the area are in a prime position, from an accessibility stand-point, to employment and service opportunities. Nevertheless, that is not a sufficient condition to allow for all residents to enjoy fruitful access to the burgeoning Austin labor market. Concerns over education and skill will prove to be the greatest challenge in assisting the upward progression of those households currently occupying the lower rungs of the income ladder.

While still further down the line, as the existing housing stock affordable to those modest means is largely of an older vintage, a growing challenge will be to ensure that those unable to move up the income ladder are still greeted with sufficient housing opportunities. As most residents are currently renters, this means that particular attention must be given to either moving households into an ownership position, or maintaining an adequate supply of a rental product type consistent with depressed demand characteristics. For more detail concerning the existing housing stock and demand, interested readers are referred to the Affordable Housing section of this Master Plan.

Austin Area Demographic Trends

The demographics and trends of the East Riverside Corridor area are reflective of trends in the city as a whole. Austin is evolving as a city and as an urban area, and is experiencing several large-scale phenomena of urbanization. Austin's quality of life has become its biggest economic development engine and the city's diverse demographic structure serves to support and enrich its quality of life. The City of Austin Demographer, Ryan Robinson, has created a list of the top ten demographic trends in the Austin region, many of which are relevant to the East Riverside Corridor area. In these trends, the theme of ethnic change and diversification is a common one. These trends are briefly described below.

Number One: No majority. The City of Austin has now crossed the threshold of becoming a Majority-Minority city. Put another way, no ethnic or demographic group exists as a majority of the city's population. The city's Anglo share of total population has dropped below 50% (which probably occurred sometime during 2005) and will stay there for the foreseeable future. The growth of other ethnic groups has outpaced the growth of Anglo households. For example, the growth rate of Latino and Asian households far exceeds the growth of Anglo households in Austin. This can be seen in the East Riverside Corridor area in the diversity of the residents.

Number Two: Decreasing families-with-children share in the urban core. The share of all households within the city's urban core made-up of families-with-children is slowly declining. In 1970, the urban core's families-with-children share was just above 32%, Census 2000 puts the figure at not quite 14%. Moreover, with only a few neighborhood exceptions, portions of the urban core are becoming almost devoid of married-with-children households. Citywide, the trends have been similar in that the overall number of families-with-children has increased while the share of total households from families-with-children has decreased. This relative loss of families-with-children households has significant implications for the city's several school districts, but AISD will feel the greatest brunt of the effect.

Number Three: African American share on the wane. The city's African American share of total population will more than likely continue its shallow slide even as the absolute number of African Americans in the city continues to increase.

Number Four: Hispanic share of total population is growing. The Hispanic share of the population will be close to the Anglo share of the population in a short 25 years. Hispanic growth is strong - the city's Hispanic share in 1990 was under 23%, the Census 2000 figure was almost 31%, and this share of total is probably around 35% today. Importantly, the city's stream of incoming Hispanic households is socio-economically diverse. Middle-class Hispanic households have migrated to Austin from other parts of the state and the country for high-tech and trade sector jobs while international immigrant Hispanic and Latino households have come here for construction and service sector jobs.

Number Five: Asian share skyrocketing. The Asian share of total population in Austin almost doubled during the nineties, leaping from 3.3% in 1990 to almost 5% by 2000 and stands somewhere near the 6.5% mark today. Like their Hispanic counterparts, the incoming Asians to Austin during the past 15 years are a much more diverse sub-population than what existed in Austin in the past.

Number Six: Geography of African Americans, dispersion and flight to the suburbs. The critical mass and historical heavy concentration of African American households in

east Austin began eroding during the 1980s, and by the mid-1990s, had really begun to break apart. Over the past 25 years, middle-class African American households have left east Austin for the suburbs and other parts of Austin. The level of residential segregation for African Americans has dropped significantly as their level of spatial concentration has diminished.

Number Seven: Geography of Hispanics, intensifying urban barrios along with movement into rural areas. Maps of Hispanic household concentrations from Census 2000 reveal the emergence of three overwhelmingly Hispanic population centers in Austin: lower east Austin (which also serves as the political bedrock of Austin's Hispanic community), greater Dove Springs, and the St. Johns area. The import of this trend is this: at the same time that ethnic minority populations are moving into the middle-class and are more capable than ever to live anywhere they choose, there are parts of the city where ethnic concentration is greatly increasing. However, it is lower-income minority households that are most likely to participate in the clustering phenomenon.

Number Eight: An increasingly sharp edge of affluence. Maps of Median Family Income from Census 2000 show an increasingly hard edge between affluent central Texas and less-than-affluent parts of the urban region. While some forms of residential segregation have decreased markedly over the past few decades in Austin, the degree of socio-economic spatial separation has steeply increased. The center of wealth in Austin has slowly migrated into the hills west of the city. This trend of wealth-creep out of the City creates an even greater burden for citizens funding services and facilities that are used and enjoyed by individuals from across the region.

Number Nine: Regional indigent health care burden. During the foreseeable future, the regional indigent health care burden will continue to grow and the city's disproportionate shouldering of the cost will increase as well.

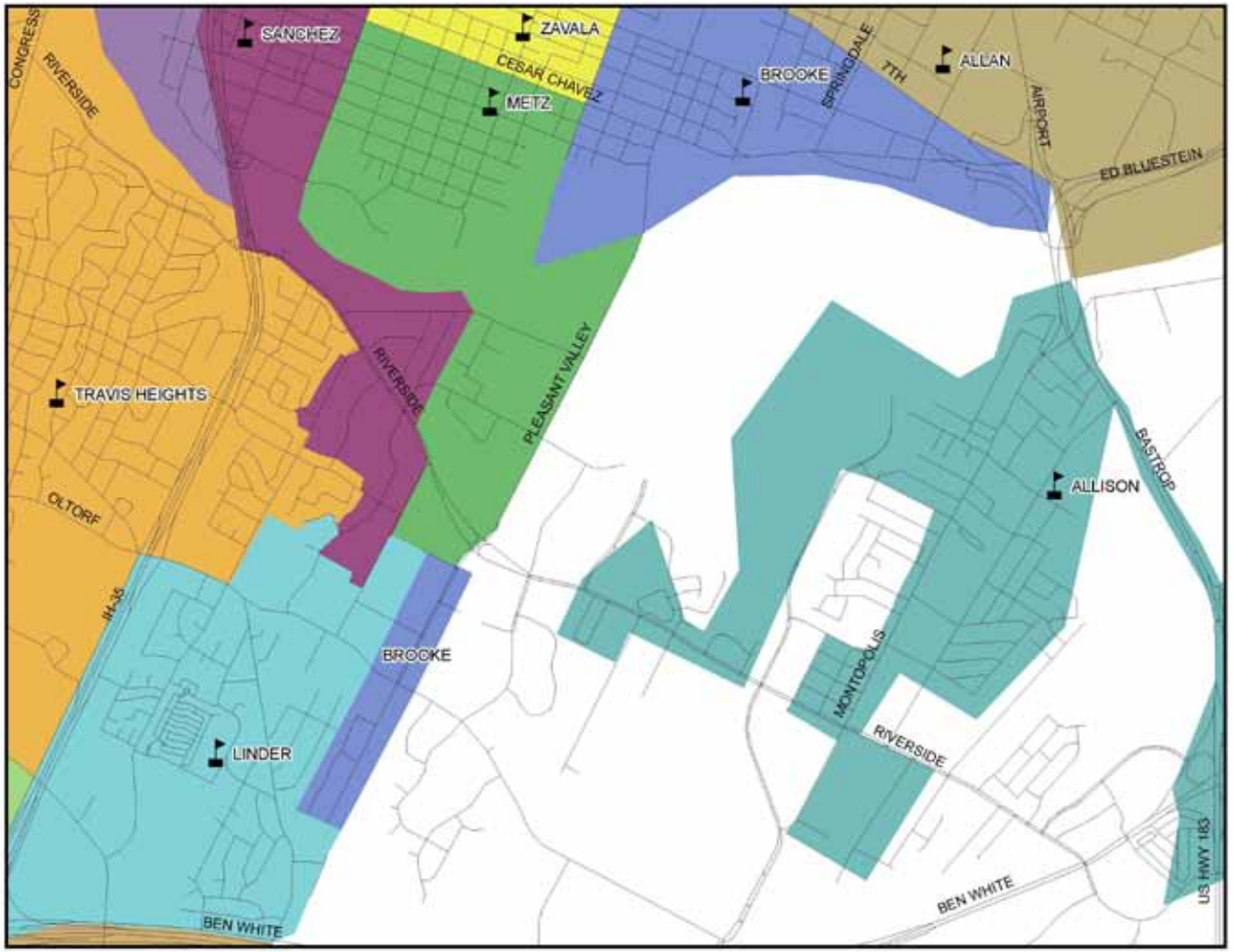
Number Ten: Intensifying urban sprawl. The Austin region will continue to experience intense urban sprawl. Although there is an enormous amount of residential development currently underway within the urban core and in downtown Austin, the thousands of new units being created there will be only a drop in the regional bucket of total residential units created. There simply are very few land availability constraints in the territory surrounding Austin, enabling urban sprawl.

East Riverside Corridor Area Elementary Schools*

Seven elementary schools together serve the East Riverside Corridor. Six are within the Austin Independent School District (AISD), one, Baty Elementary, falls within the Del Valle ISD (see Exhibit A.10). The western zone of the corridor, where the densest concentration of apartments is found, is served by Travis Heights, Sanchez, Metz, Linder and Brooke elementary schools. Together, these schools serve an overwhelmingly low income, Hispanic, highly mobile student population as shown in Exhibit A.11.

While the performance of schools serving the East Riverside area varies widely, it is notable that two of the schools (Metz and Brooke) are currently "recognized" under the state accountability system. This means that students at these schools meet state standards for passage of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). To achieve this status, all sub-groups at the school must meet the standards. Scores are calculated for each racial and ethnic group and also for students categorized as "economically disadvantaged" or "low English proficiency." Schools with large shares of low income students typically have the hardest time meeting the standards for all groups. Yet low income and Hispanic students at these two schools outperform their peers across the city. Only 3 other 'Title I' schools in AISD achieved "recognized" or "exemplary" status in 2008-09 (AISD, http://www.austinisd.org/schools/campus.phtml?opt=bylevel&slevel=elementary, accessed 10/29/09). (Title 1 schools are those whose student population is sufficiently low income to qualify them for additional funds from the national Department of Education, under

Exhibit A.10:
AISD Elementary School District Map, 2009



* Elementary school data and analysis provided by Elizabeth J. Mueller, Assistant Professor of Community and Regional Planning and Social Work, University of Texas at Austin.

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.) These two schools also demonstrate lower rates of student mobility than their peer schools in the area—a significant accomplishment in light of the high mobility of low income households generally.

In the past two years, redevelopment has begun in the western part of the East Riverside Corridor, falling most heavily in the catchment area for Metz Elementary school. As a result, Metz has seen a 27% decline in its student population, falling from 676 students in 2006, to 544 in 2008, to 494 in 2009. While the principal has encouraged parents to keep their children at Metz by applying for within district transfers, many families are unable to do so since they have moved further east into the Del Valle School District, where rents are lower, and are thus not eligible to remain in AISD schools.

Sanchez Elementary, another school located north of the river that serves the western segment of the Corridor, has also been affected by redevelopment. While most of the demolished complexes to date have fallen in the Metz catchment area, Sanchez has seen an increase in movement of children into and out of their school: boundaries for their catchment area have changed 3 times in 8 years, resulting in both sharp increases and turnover in student population. Sanchez has seen its school accountability rating fall from "exemplary" to its current status, "academically acceptable."

Challenges emerging at these local schools may foreshadow problems that will intensify as the Corridor continues to undergo redevelopment. It will be particularly important that the City and AISD work together to identify solutions and strategies that will support the success that some schools have achieved, built over years of effort.

Exhibit A.11:

Elementary Schools serving the East Riverside Corridor, Demographics, 2008

Elementary School (state accountability rating)	Hispanic student population	Economically disadvantaged student population	Limited English Proficiency population	Mobility rate 2006-07
Brooke (Recognized 2008)	87%	93%	29%	23.9%
Allison Elementary (Academically Acceptable)	90%	95%	38%	30.0%
Linder (Academically acceptable)	90%	95%	60%	36.7%
Metz (Recognized 2008)	97%	93%	54%	25.3%
Sanchez (Academically acceptable)	94%	92%	62%	30.8%
Baty (Del Valle ISD)	80%	90%	31%	30.0%
Travis Heights (unacceptable 2008)	68%	77%	24%	21.4%
AISD	57%	60%	24%	25.5%

Source: Demographic data and campus mobility rates are from the Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System, 2007-08 Campus Profile. Campus mobility rates are for 2006-07 (same source).

Exhibit A.12:

Students meeting Texas reading standards, 2007-08, percent

School	All students	Hispanic students	Economically disadvantaged students
Brooke	83%	83%	82%
Metz	84%	84%	84%
AISD	83%	78%	76%

Source: Texas Education Agency, Adequate Yearly Progress Campus Data Table, Final 2008 AYP Results. Reports for Brooke and Metz Elementary Schools.

Crime Statistics

The 78741 zip code, of which the East Riverside Corridor planning area is a part, had the highest crime rate in most of the categories reported by the City of Austin Police Department during the last reporting year of 2007. Based on available statistics from the City Police Department for the period of January 2007 to December 2007, the project area can be considered a high crime rate area (See Exhibit A.13).

Health and Human Services in the East Riverside Corridor Area

There are a number of government and private agencies providing health and human services in the East Riverside Corridor area. These services are particularly important for low-income residents in the area.

City of Austin Montopolis Neighborhood Center, 1416 Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78741. The goal of the City of Austin Human Services division is to promote and foster increased self-sufficiency, healthy behaviors, and healthy lifestyles to improve the quality of life for the city's most vulnerable citizens. Human Services include: child care information and services, homeless assistance, day labor and employment programs, mental health/substance abuse services, programs for at-risk youth, and basic needs services. City of Austin Healthy Neighborhood Centers provide a variety of social services for low and moderate-income families in need. The Austin Health Connection mobile vans provide preventative health services (health screenings and health education) in various community based sites.

Montopolis Recreation Center, 1200 Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78741. Montopolis Recreation Center was originally owned by the Dolores Catholic Church and was first known as the Montopolis Community Center. In 1971, the Austin Parks and Recreation Department and the Austin Model Cities Program entered into an agreement whereby the Montopolis Community Center was to be operated as an extension of the Parks and Recreation Center. The Center, while dated and needing improvements, continues to be a vital part of the community. Montopolis Recreation Center and park contains a gymnasium, kitchen, boxing room, two meeting rooms, shower and dressing room facilities, playscape, swimming pool and a lighted softball/football field. The Center offers the Kids Cafe Program, which is sponsored by the Capital Area Food Bank. The center provides free, hot, nutritious meals for youth ages 1-18 years during the after school time. Center activities include adult sports leagues, weight room and youth after school program, cheerleading, boxing, karate, basketball, flag-football and teen adventure.

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, 6201 E. Oltorf Street # 600, Austin, TX 78741. The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities is dedicated to ensuring that all Texans with developmental disabilities, about 437,885 individuals, have the opportunity to be independent, productive and valued members of their communities. Using a variety of methods, the Council works to ensure that the service delivery system provides comprehensive services and supports that meet people's needs, are easy to access and are cost effective. They also work to improve people's understanding of disability issues. The Council uses its information about the service system, disability issues and people's needs to develop projects and activities that are focused on the gaps and barriers in the current array of services and supports and to help Texans with disabilities and their families live in, work in and contribute to their community. These activities are designed to impact the entire state and are developed in close collaboration with consumers, parents, advocate groups, state agencies, service providers, and state and local policymakers.

Casey Family Programs, 5201 E. Riverside Drive, Austin, TX 78741. Casey Family Programs is the nation's largest operating foundation entirely focused on foster care. Since 1966, they have worked to provide and improve—and ultimately prevent the need for—foster care in the United States. The Casey Family Program identifies various improvements in child welfare practices, and helps states and counties implement them. The Program promotes these changes by providing nonpartisan

Exhibit A.13:
City of Austin Crime Statistics, 2007

Area	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	Arson	Total Crimes
78741	6	41	274	212	840	2,951	358	7	4,689
City of Austin	31	334	1,543	1,795	7,995	34,318	3,109	98	49,223
78741 as a % of City	19%	12%	18%	12%	11%	9%	12%	7%	10%

research to members of congress, state legislators and other policymakers so they may craft laws and policies to better the lives of children in foster care and their families. Their goal is to safely reduce the number of children in foster care and improve the lives of those who remain in care.

SafePlace, 1515 Grove Blvd. # A, Austin, TX 78741. SafePlace provides safety for individuals and families affected by sexual and domestic violence; helps victims in their healing so they can move beyond being defined by the crimes committed against them, and become survivors; promotes safe and healthy relationships for the Prevention of sexual and domestic violence; and engages the community in advancing alternatives in attitudes, behaviors and policies to impact our understanding and responses to sexual and domestic violence. SafePlace is ending sexual and domestic violence through safety, healing and prevention for individuals, families and our community.

Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, 6101 E. Oltorf Street, Austin, TX 78741. The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, or DARS, administers programs that ensure Texas is a state where people with disabilities, and children who have developmental delays, enjoy the same opportunities as other Texans to live independent and productive lives. DARS is composed of four divisions focused on people with disabilities and children with developmental delays. The department includes the Division for Rehabilitation Services (DRS), the Division for Blind Services (DBS), the Division for Disability Determination Services (DDS) and the Division for Early Childhood Intervention (ECI). Through these divisions, DARS administers programs that help Texans with disabilities find jobs through vocational rehabilitation, ensure that Texans with disabilities live independently in their communities, and assist families in helping their children under age 3 with disabilities and delays in development reach their full potential.

WIC, 1416 Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78741. WIC provides Federal grants to States for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. The following benefits are provided to WIC participants: supplemental nutritious foods; nutrition education and counseling at WIC clinics; screening and referrals to other health, welfare and social services.

Big Brothers Big Sisters, 2211 S. I H 35 Ste. 110, Austin, TX 78741. Big Brothers Big Sisters matches children ages 6 through 18 with mentors in professionally supported one-to-one relationships. Matches come together through Community-based mentoring and school-based mentoring.

Youth Advocacy Inc., 4150 Freidrich Lane, Austin, TX 78741. Youth Advocacy provides substance abuse intervention services to a target population of at-risk youth 13-17 years old and their parents. It does this by using a curriculum that has been scientifically tested and found to produce the desired result of reducing and/or delaying the onset of drug use among the target population. This is known as the Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC) program. Youth Advocacy also provides case management services to youth and families receiving substance treatment through the Travis County Juvenile Probation Department. The intent of this program is to increase the possibilities of a successful youth treatment episode and successful reintegration of the youth back into the community. This is accomplished by helping the families of the youth develop and/or enhance their ability to help the youth maintain what they've gained from the treatment episode.

Austin Travis County Safe Haven Homeless Shelter, 5307 E. Riverside Drive, Austin, TX 78741. Safe Haven's goal is to ensure a safe and accepting living environment while providing qualified staff to instill trust, and guide the resident to review the choices in his or her life. Safe Haven offers semi-private rooms for up to 16 people per day, 3 meals daily, laundry facilities, meeting rooms for residents and an actual address and phone number for facilitating service entry and correspondence with friends, family, and employers. This program offers the following services: assertive outreach to single diagnosis of substance abuse and dual diagnosis (substance abuse and mental illness); coordination of services; and increase awareness and case finding in the community through information dissemination.

Central Texas Veterans Health Care System - Austin Outpatient Clinic, 2901 Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78741. The Central Texas Veterans Health Care System (CTVHCS) has a stand-alone clinic in Austin providing the following services: Urgent Care, Primary Care, Women's Clinic, Mental Health, Laboratory, Optical Shop, Pharmacy, Prosthetics, Radiology, Social Work, OEF/OIF Program, Patient Education, Homeless Veterans Program, Home Based Primary Care, VA Medical Eligibility.

Montopolis Community Health Center, Primary Care1200-B Montopolis Drive, Austin, TX 78741. This Community Health Center provides access to care in one of Travis County's poorest and most underserved areas. The Montopolis clinic enabled the department to provide primary care as well as behavioral health services in an area with little to no available health care resources.

Asset Creation Programs and Initiatives

NHCD's Housing Smarts Housing Counseling Program is a Homebuyer Education Program that offers homeownership training from pre-purchase and post-purchase classroom instruction to one-on-one counseling for individuals who need information about homeownership.

The NHCD Down Payment Assistance Program (DPA) provides qualified, first-time homebuyers, with a zero interest loan to assist with purchasing a home located within the Austin City Limits. DPA funds cover the down payment and eligible closing costs and pre-paid expenses associated with buying a home.

The mission of the Financial Literacy Coalition of Central Texas (FLCCT) is to foster community prosperity by enhancing the knowledge and skills Central Texans need for improved financial decision-making. The FLCCT recruits and trains volunteers to provide sound money management education to adults and youth throughout the Central Texas community, focusing on community, workplace, and youth education.

Bank On Central Texas is a community initiative led by United Way and PeopleFund to bring together banks, credit unions, financial services providers, government, private sector, community organizations, and nonprofits to bring more people into the financial mainstream. Establishing a relationship with a mainstream financial institution, such as a bank or credit union, can be a crucial first step to provide families with opportunities to save, access affordable credit, and purchase assets. Families with access to basic financial products are more likely to have savings and assets, and are less likely to utilize financial services that charge high fees and interest rates.

Area Businesses and Small Business Assistance Programs

Current commercial uses of land in the East Riverside Corridor area are dominated by consumer retail and services and also include a community flea market. In addition to these establishments, there are also a few institutional uses, including 12 places of worship and a fire station. Noteworthy is the fact that more than half of establishments along East Riverside Drive are independent. There are few large employment centers in the area, with only nine employers in the entire 78741 zip code that have more than 100 employees each (See Exhibit A.14).

Although introduction of an urban rail line, redevelopment, and other changes in the East Riverside Corridor may make the area more attractive for employment centers and bring new customers to the area, it will also pose challenges for existing small businesses. Resources available to business owners should be publicized. Two programs serving small business owners are the City of Austin Small Business Development Program and the Texas State University Small Business Development Center.

Exhibit A.14:
East Riverside Corridor Uses and Establishments

Establishments by type		
	Places of Worship	12
	Apartments	13
	Independent Establishments	96
	Franchise Establishments	69
	Public Services	1
Establishments by business type		
	Retail Stores	24.3%
	Restaurants	18.8%
	Personal Services	14.4%
	Miscellaneous - Other	11.0%
	Financial	8.3%
	Auto	7.2%
	Business Services	5.5%
	Medical	5.5%
	Entertainment	5.0%

Source: Rz Associates

The main objective of the City of Austin Small Business Development Program is to provide assistance and business solutions to emerging small businesses by offering training and technical assistance to anyone starting, expanding, or managing a small business. It also serves as a clearinghouse of information to directly help business owners or refer them to the "right place." One element of the Small Business Development Program is a Business Solutions Center, which has dedicated space and staff to assist small business owners with technology and resources. The Center provides current information and innovative technology resources to help Austin's small businesses grow and prosper. The Center also has a BizAid Program, which provides customized business solutions and classes to transition entrepreneurs from one growth phase into another.

The City of Austin's Neighborhood Commercial Management Program (NCMP) provides financial assistance in the form of business loans to existing businesses looking to expand their operations. Firms that have been in existence for two or more years can apply for the NCMP loan. The loan provides money for acquisition of land and improvements, construction of a new building, leasehold improvements, and purchasing machinery and equipment. The program is available city wide, but does recognize several priority areas.

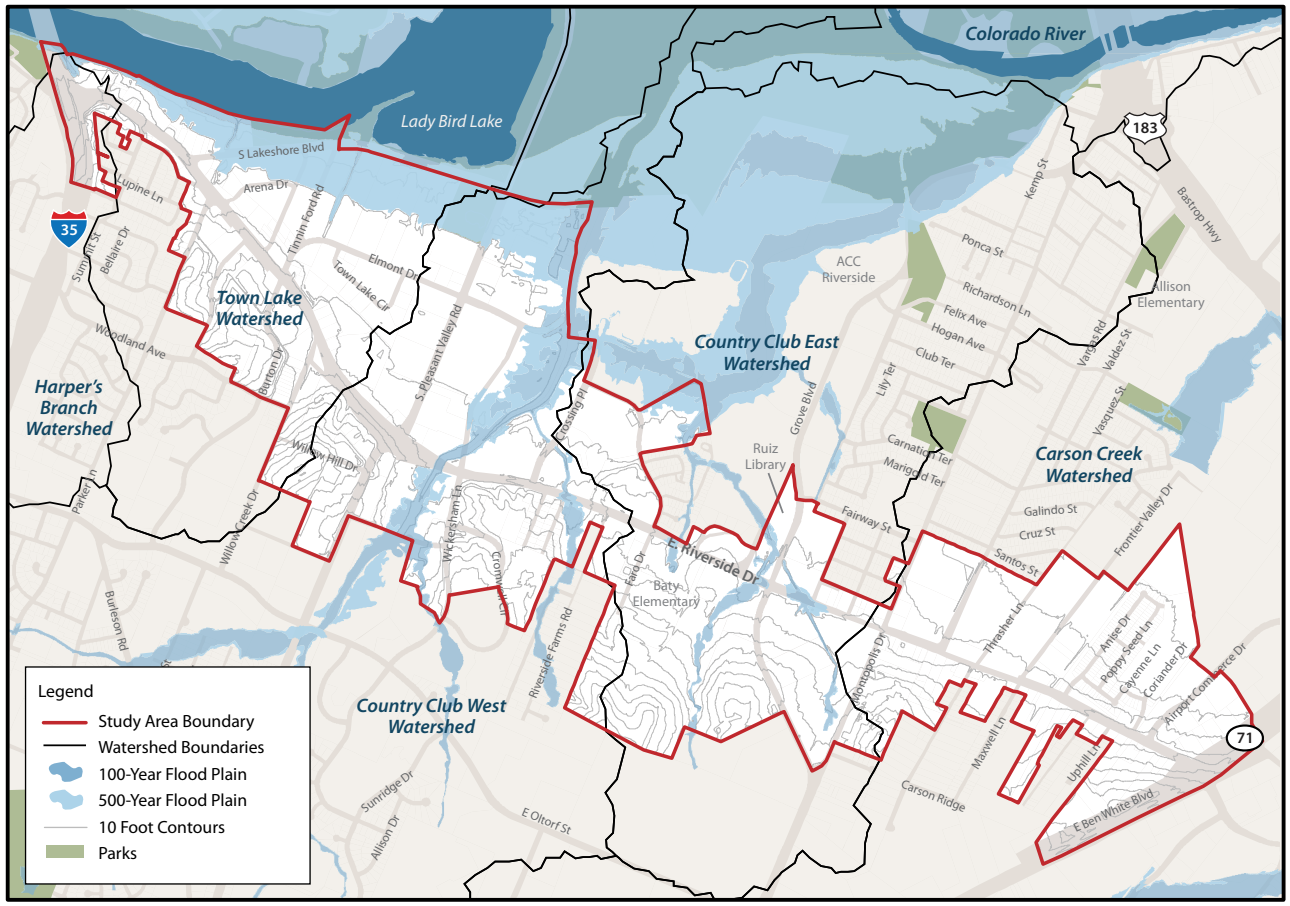
The Texas State University Small Business Development Center (SBDC) works with existing and startup small businesses to help them grow and compete in today's global economy. SBDC provides assistance during every phase of the business life cycle. The SBDC's professional staff of counselors, trainers, and researchers provides comprehensive, confidential business counseling services that are at no cost to the client. The improvements that result from the Center's support lead to job creation, investments, and economic growth for communities throughout central Texas.

Topography & Floodplains

The elevation change along East Riverside Drive provides opportunities to define logical segments and direct views to Lady Bird Lake and the downtown Austin skyline. Topographic contour lines depicted in Exhibit A.15 identify the ways in which the terrain dramatically changes from the hills on the southern side of the Corridor towards the lake to the north.

In conjunction with the elevation changes that occur, several areas in the Corridor lie within the 100 year floodplain. These floodplains primarily run in a north-south direction from the center of the Study Area into Lady Bird Lake and the Colorado River further east.

Exhibit A.15:
Natural Features Map



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Natural Gas and Electrical Services

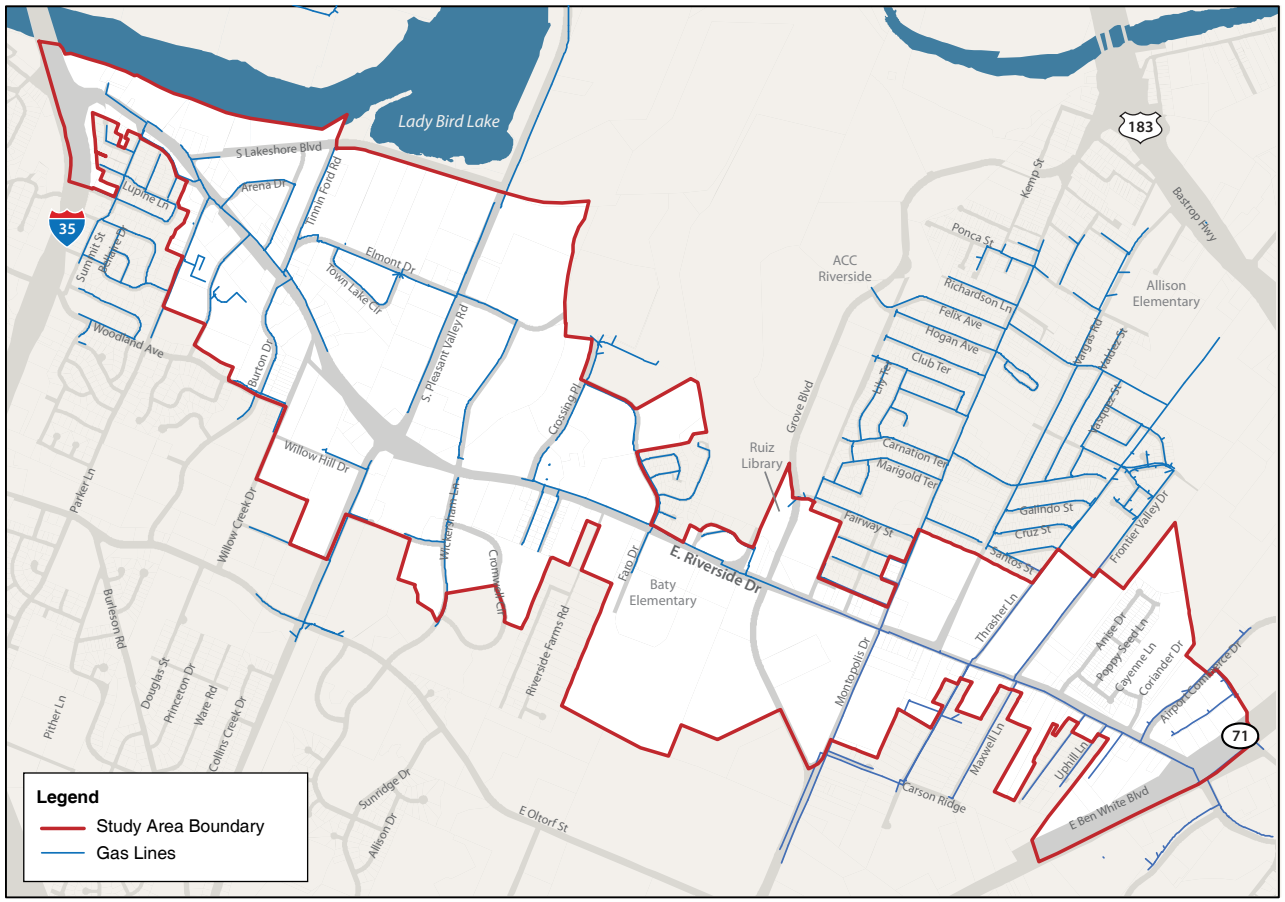
Natural gas service in this portion of East Austin is provided by Texas Gas Service. The transmission lines range from 2 inch to 6 inch wrapped steel pipes along East Riverside Drive. The natural gas transmission lines are located generally on the north of East Riverside Drive from IH 35 to Country Club Road and on the south from Country Club Road to SH 71 (as can be seen in Exhibit A.16). The gas pipe network extending through the remaining Study Area not adjacent to East Riverside Drive ranges in size from 1-1/4 inches to 6 inches.

All of the natural gas transmission lines along East Riverside Drive are within the ROW. Utility easements located perpendicular (i.e. north/south) to East Riverside Drive also exist to provide additional natural gas lines that tie into the lines located along the East Riverside Drive.

Electrical Service along the East Riverside Corridor is provided by Austin Energy. Transmission lines along East Riverside Drive are generally over-head and on the north side of the roadway in the sections between IH 35 and Faro Dr. and also between Montopolis and SH 71. The electrical service is on the south side along East Riverside Drive from Faro to Montopolis. Two electrical relay towers are located in the median at the intersection of Riverside and South Pleasant Valley. There are underground and overhead electric lines branching from East Riverside Drive to the remaining Corridor at most street intersections.

There are currently no electrical substations located in the existing East Riverside Drive ROW. However, based on Austin Energy information, there are transformers and other electrical infrastructure within the ROW. All of the electrical transmission lines along the East Riverside Corridor are located within the street ROW.

Exhibit A.16:
Natural Gas Utilities Map



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Infrastructure Conditions

Water Distribution System

The City of Austin water distribution network in the East Riverside Corridor is composed of various pipe materials and range in sizes from 6 inches to 24 inches. The transmission pipes follow the alignment of the East Riverside Drive and are generally located under the existing Riverside Drive travel lanes or within the right-of-way. The water system is currently adequately serving existing development in the area.

Wastewater Collection System

The East Riverside Corridor Study Area is served by the South Austin Interceptor (SAI) of the City of Austin wastewater collection system. The SAI is a large diameter pipe that runs underneath the south edge of Lady Bird Lake. An assessment provided by the City states that the SAI is "loaded to near capacity at present" and that "It is the only well defined capacity concern for the Study Area." It is the only part of the wastewater system that may constrain potential future development. The City has plans for and has funded a Downtown Wastewater Tunnel that will run underground from Shoal Creek Lift station south under Auditorium shores and east connecting to the existing Govalle tunnel. This project could solve capacity problems in the study area by receiving the upper SAI flows and allowing for additional capacity in the Corridor area.

The wastewater pipes, ranging in size from 4 inches to 54 inches in diameter, with 8" diameter pipe being the most common, transfer wastewater generally to the north and east through the Corridor to the South Austin Regional (SAR) treatment plant. The majority of these pipes were installed in the 1950's and 1960's. According to the City's assessment, this aging infrastructure is the reason peak flows occur during large storm events (4 to 6 inches of rain). Infiltration and inflow that enters the collection system during storm events increases flow rates by 4 to 6 times the average flow.

Reclaimed Water System

Reclaimed water is non-potable water that is used for irrigation, cooling, and manufacturing. In Austin, the reclaimed water distribution system is growing from the east, where the reclaimed water originates, toward central Austin, where more customers are located. Existing reclaimed water mains are to the east and north of the East Riverside Corridor. Construction projects, one in design and another in planning, will extend a reclaimed water main to the periphery of the Corridor. Ultimately reclaimed water mains will extend into and beyond the Corridor.

Storm Drainage System

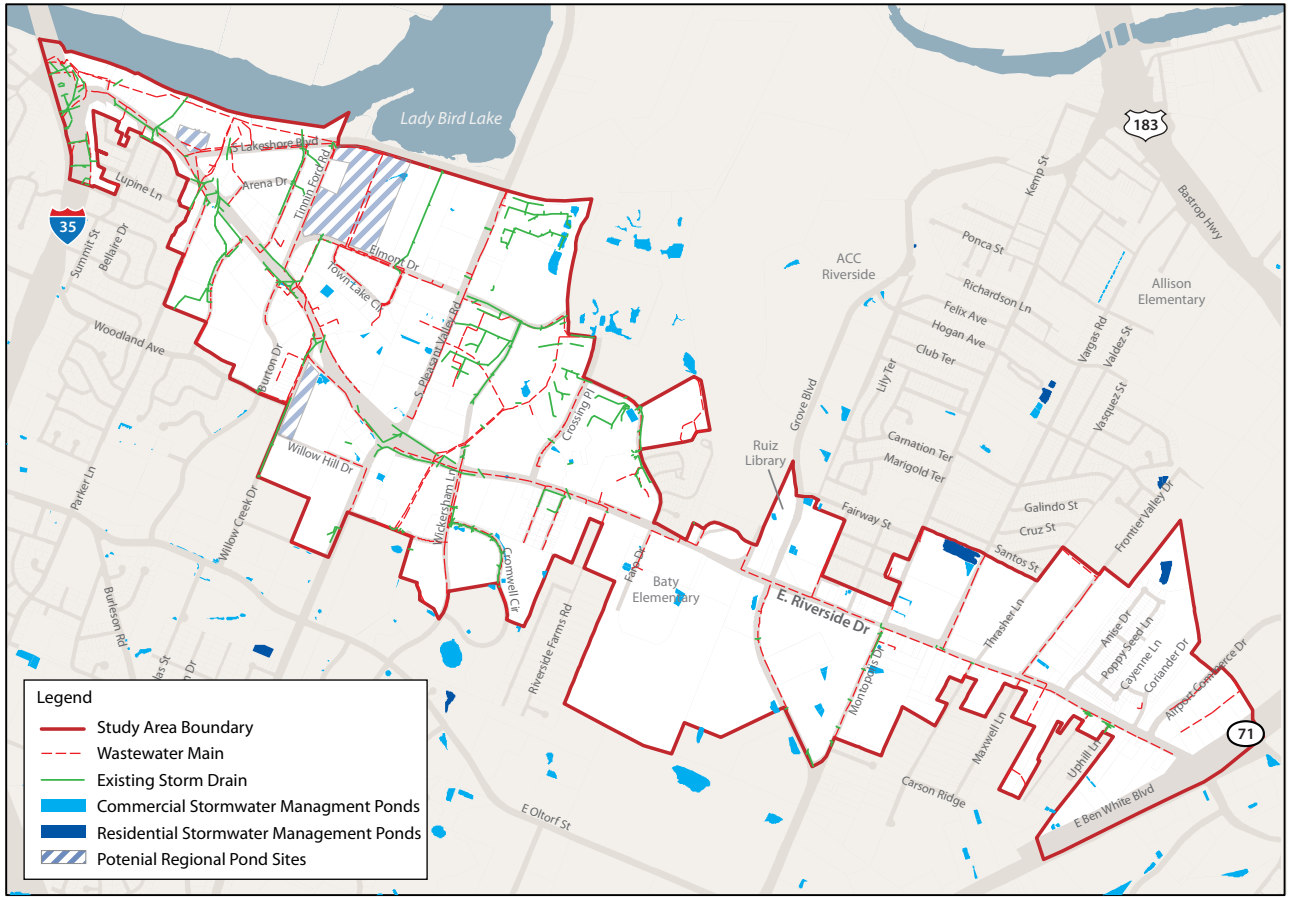
The Storm Drainage system in the East Riverside Corridor Study Area is not fully mapped by the City. There are some areas of concern due to undersized or insufficient culverts under East Riverside Drive and downstream of the Study Area, as evidenced by drainage flooding complaints noted by City staff and area residents. There are also a few erosion concerns noted by City staff due to high channel velocities and erosive soils. The City has regional detention ponds upstream and downstream of the Study Area that currently serve commercial and/or residential development areas located outside the East Riverside Corridor. These ponds were sized under old drainage criteria; further analysis would be required to determine capacity. There are presently no detention structures specifically for drainage generated by East Riverside Drive located within the right-of way (ROW).

However, staged storage detention and discharge facilities will be required for improvements made to East Riverside Drive in the event of expanding the impervious cover of the roadway. There is a proposed Santos Street Drainage Improvement Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to improve drainage in one specific location near the intersection of Montopolis and Riverside Drive. This project has been recommended to address existing drainage problems and has been identified in the long range CIP plan, but is not funded at this time.

Redevelopment in the Corridor will require new runoff control and drainage structures located at each development site and/or regional detention structures (i.e. detention/bio-filtration ponds). These ponds generally are the responsibility of the property developer and are site specific. However, at the discretion of the City of Austin, a regional detention facility could be constructed if a suitable site is available, perhaps as a public-private partnership.

Exhibit A.17 identifies existing wastewater mains and storm drains within the Study Area.

Exhibit A.17:
Stormwater/Wastewater Map



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Traffic & Accidents

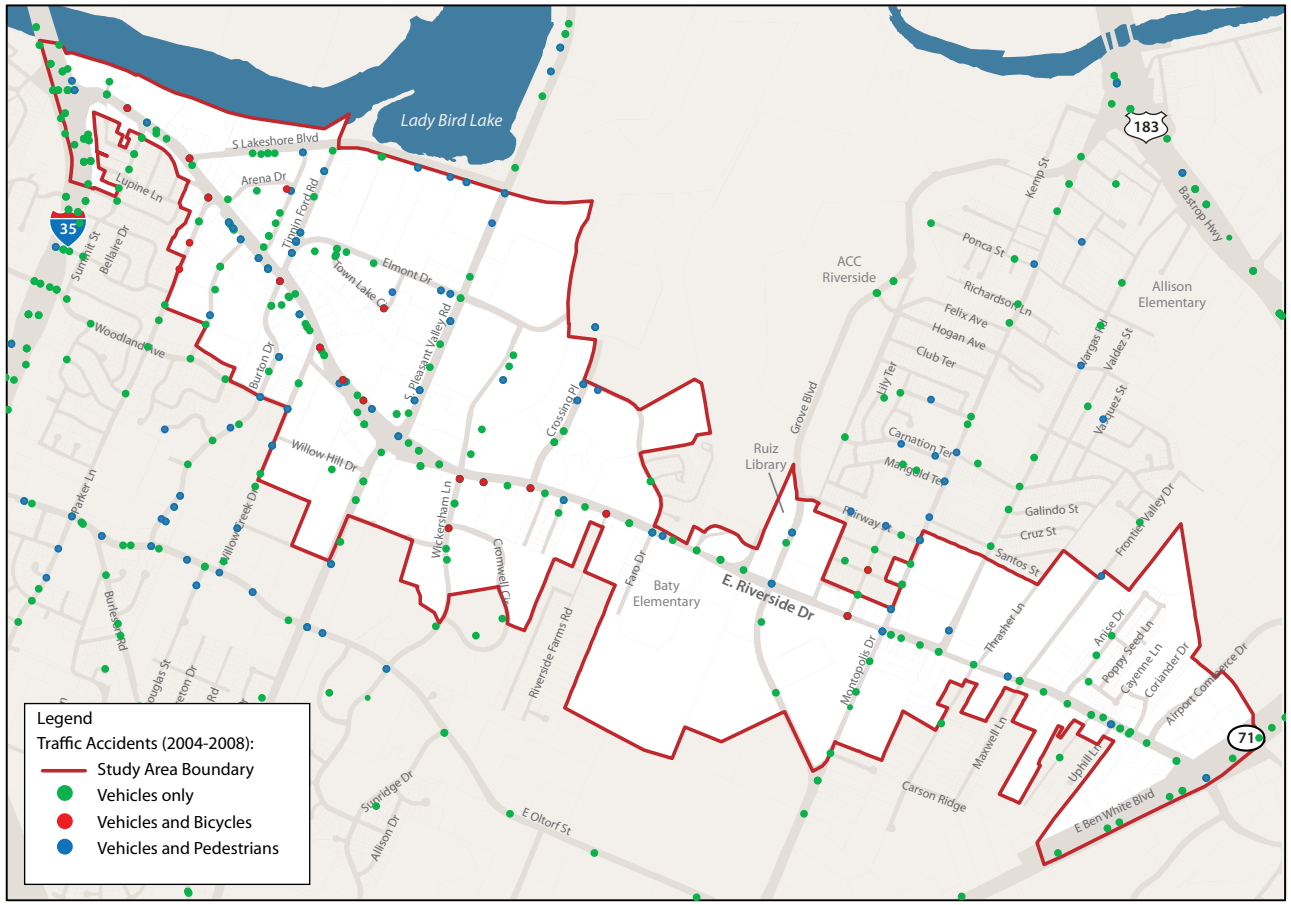
East Riverside Drive is a major east-west arterial and one of the main gateways to Downtown Austin from the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA). The next closest east-west arterials are East Oltorf Street, located to the south, and East Cesar Chavez, located to the north of Lady Bird Lake. Within the Study Area, East Riverside Drive typically consists of three through lanes in each direction with curb and gutter and a raised center median. Dedicated turn lanes are present at multiple intersections throughout the area. The portion of East Riverside Drive within the Study Area has twelve signalized intersections with crosswalks including the intersections at SH 71 and IH 35.

Traffic counts from 2005 on Riverside Drive range from 55,000 vehicles per day (vpd) near the intersection with IH 35 to almost 10,000 vpd near the SH 71 intersection. Major traffic congestion occurs at the following intersections:

E. Riverside @ IH 35
E. Riverside @ South Pleasant Valley Rd.
E. Riverside @ Grove Blvd.
E. Riverside @ Montopolis Dr.
E. Riverside @ Ben White Blvd. (SH 71)

The City has documented multiple automobile, pedestrian and bicycle accidents along East Riverside Drive and the adjoining streets. Exhibit A.18 indicates locations where auto-only accidents, bicycle-automobile accidents, and pedestrian-automobile accidents have occurred in the Study Area from 2004 to 2008. While the accidents are dispersed throughout the Study Area, a cluster of auto-only accidents have occurred along East Riverside Drive between Tinnin Ford and South Pleasant Valley. In addition, a number of pedestrian/auto accidents have occurred between Lakeshore and Tinnin Ford. Bicycle/auto accidents tend to be focused around the East Riverside Drive split near the South Pleasant Valley intersection.

Exhibit A.18:
Traffic and Accident Locations Map



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

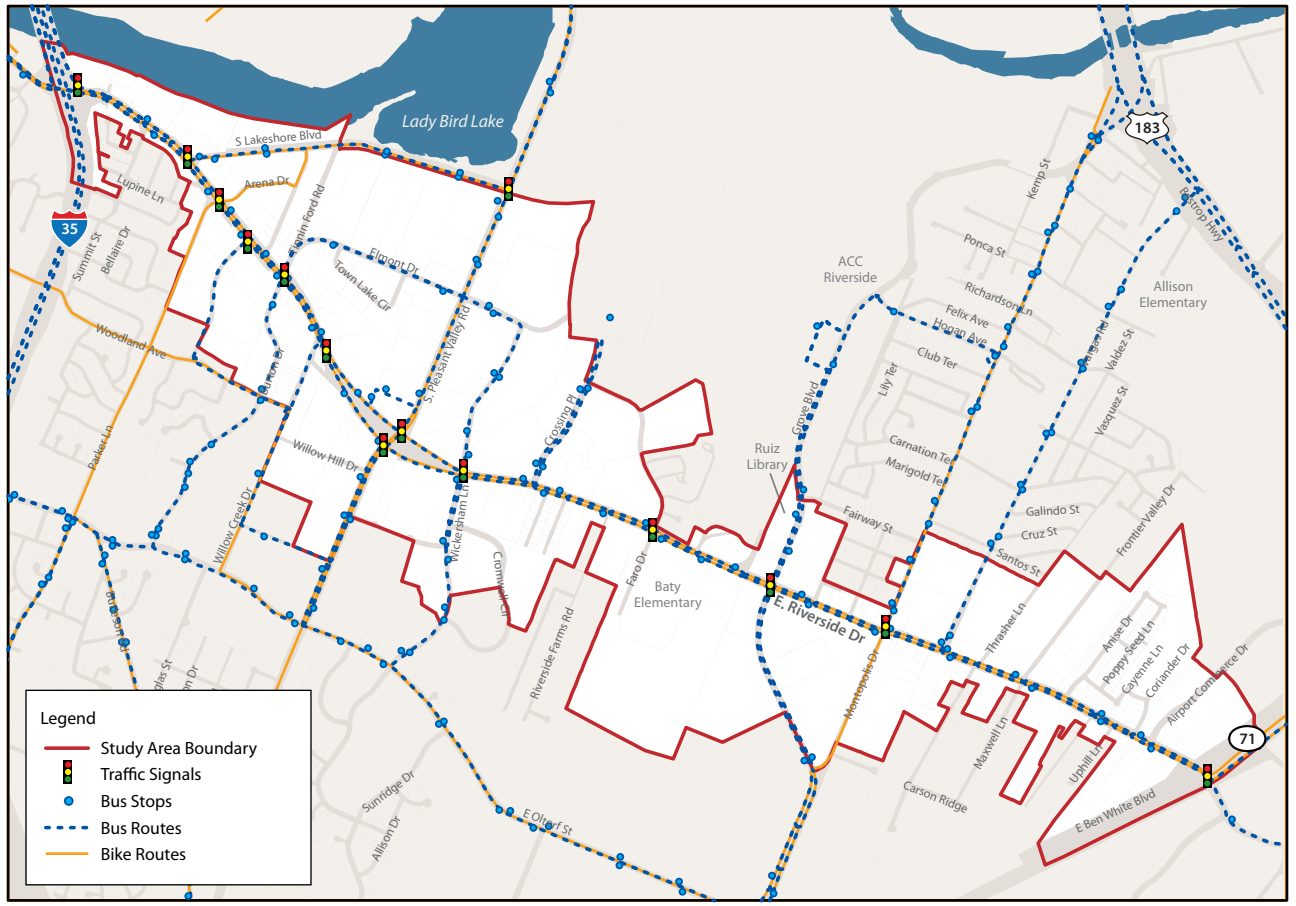
Local Transit Routes

Several bus lines currently run along the East Riverside Corridor, creating numerous connections between the Study Area and the rest of the city. Several local service buses serve the area along East Riverside Drive including Grove Boulevard, Montopolis Drive, and Vargas Road. These routes connect the study area to Downtown Austin, University of Texas (UT) and Springdale Shopping Center. The "Airport Flyer" route connects UT to the Austin-Bergstrom Airport with limited stops. The University of Texas students in the area have many options to get to campus via bus routes on Lakeshore Boulevard, Pleasant Valley Road, Crossing Place, etc. Exhibit A.19 Local Transit and Bicycle Routes Map identifies the location of bus stops along the Corridor. Typical bus stops for the Corridor range from covered structures with seating, to uncovered seating, to stand alone bus stop signs.

Bicycle Network

Several bike routes exist within the Study Area providing a basic network for bicycles. Most of the facilities in this area are shared lane bike routes; however, there are separated bicycle lanes on Pleasant Valley Rd. and Woodland Ave, and a trail through Roy G. Guerro Colorado River Park. The main existing bicycle routes are on the following roads: East Riverside Drive, Arena Dr/Parker Lane, Pleasant Valley Road, Wickersham Lane, Grove Boulevard, Montopolis Boulevard, and Vargas Road.

Exhibit A.19:
Local Transit and Bicycle Routes Map



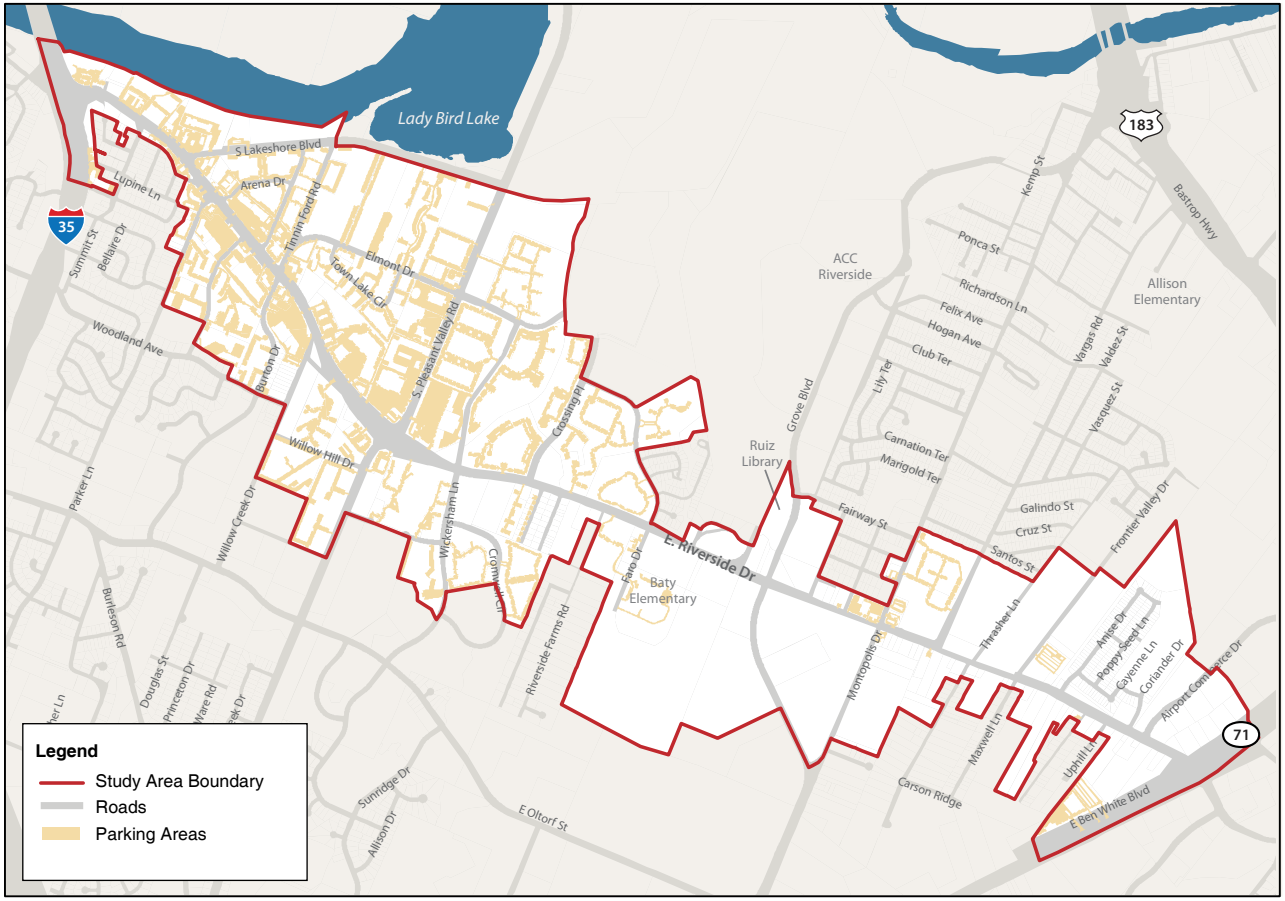
(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Roads and Surface Parking

Large surface parking lots, poor sidewalk conditions, and excessive curb cuts characterize Riverside Drive and can contribute to an uninviting pedestrian realm. Analysis of the Study Area's pedestrian experience was determined through in-field evaluation and GIS analysis. The results of the research indicate a current lack of continuity and a generally poor condition of the pedestrian realm all along East Riverside Drive.

This discontinuity exists because a significant portion of the Corridor is covered by surface parking lots or roads, especially in the western portion of the Study Area (see Exhibit A.20). A majority of the land uses along the Corridor have surface parking areas, lots or facilities that are located in front of buildings next to sidewalks. In a walking survey performed in the Study Area, very few buildings were located within 60 feet of the curb. In general, the conditions for pedestrians in the corridor are minimally adequate but in need of repair and the addition of streetscape improvements to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment.

Exhibit A.20:
Roads & Surface Parking Map



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Regional and Citywide Planning Efforts

There are several planning studies of note which affect the Study Area directly. These planning efforts range from regionally-oriented (Envision Central Texas) to localized (Montopolis Neighborhood Plan and East Riverside/ Oltorf Combined (EROC) Neighborhood Plan).

The following are key regional- and City-oriented planning efforts that directly affect the Study Area.

ECT – Envision Central Texas

The mission of Envision Central Texas is to assist in the public development and implementation of a regional vision addressing the growth of Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties, with an emphasis on land use, transportation and the environment.

ECT has adopted several guiding principles. These principles provide a statement of values about policy choices that involve land use in Central Texas. The guiding principles state that:

- The region's transportation system, environmental planning and preservation goals, social equity aspirations, and economic foundation should be coordinated to support a sustainable regional community.
- Regional policy choices should support choices of housing, transportation and employment.
- Central Texas values diversity in all policy choices.
- All decisions should promote enhanced quality of life for the residents of Central Texas.

ECT's Preferred Growth Scenario 2003 identified two types of transit, Potential High Capacity Transit and Potential Express Bus, as potentially appropriate for East Riverside Drive, showing that the Corridor has the need for high capacity, frequent transit service.

Capital Metro

Capital Metro, the City of Austin's regional transit provider, carries 130,000 riders daily and has 14 routes for University of Texas students. The Capital Metro "All Systems Go" Long Range Transit plan shows Riverside to have express and local service currently, and includes a recommendation to have a Rapid Bus route in the future. The Rapid Bus route would be reconsidered if the community decides to build a rail line along East Riverside Drive with the necessary level of development to support rail.

Downtown Austin Plan (DAP)

The Downtown Austin Plan/Urban Rail Connections Study has the potential to affect the East Riverside Corridor Plan, as rail is proposed in it from Austin Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) to the Central Business District (CBD) along E. Riverside Drive. Estimated average weekly ridership in 2030 from ABIA to CBD would be 19,100. These ridership estimates do not assume any zoning changes. The urban rail study estimates that this rail project could also be a catalyst for redevelopment along the corridor. This portion of the proposed urban rail line would be 8.3 miles from downtown to the airport and would stop at several locations along the Corridor.

The Austin Urban Rail Corridors report was presented to City Council and to the CAMPO-Transit Working Group (TWG) in November of 2008. The TWG endorsed the Urban Rail recommendations and requested further information regarding design and financing be brought back when the information becomes available. As a result of these discussions, city staff will initiate preliminary engineering, environmental studies and begin to develop financing strategies for the project. In addition, the rail project will continue to be discussed and refined as part of the ongoing Downtown Austin Plan – Phase II.

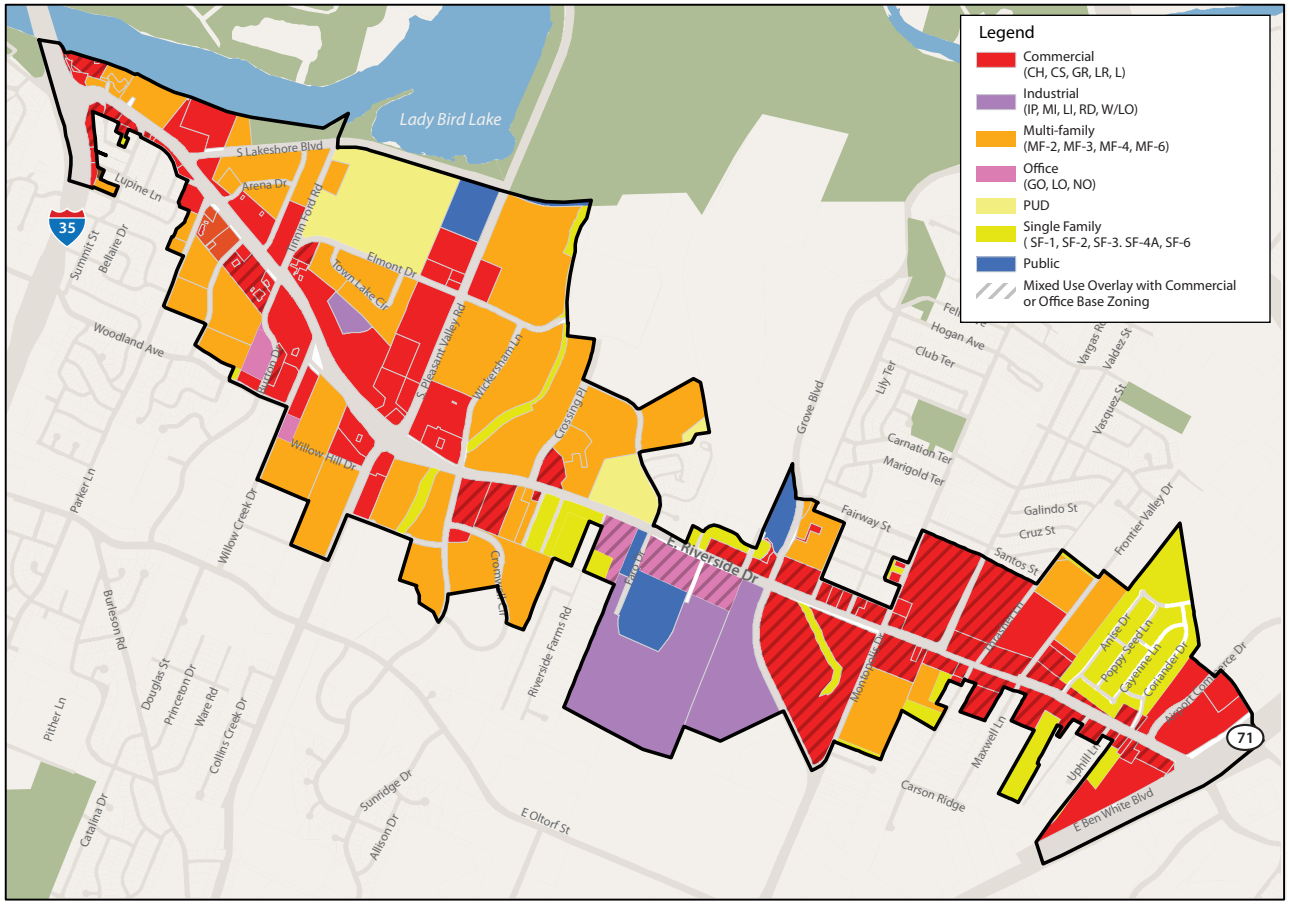
Existing Zoning

There are 12 general zoning categories currently found within the East Riverside Corridor (see Exhibit A.21). Most zoning within the western portion of the Study Area consists of Commercial and Multi-family. The eastern portion of the Study Area ranges from Single Family to Commercial, and several properties also include a Mixed Use overlay.

Design Standards and Mixed Use

The Study Area is subject to the Design Standards and Mixed Use Subchapter of the Austin Land Development Code. In these regulations, adopted in August 2006, East Riverside Drive is identified as a Core Transit Corridor (CTC) from IH 35 to South Pleasant Valley Road. Properties along a CTC have higher sidewalk standards and generally require buildings to be placed closer to the street. These properties may also have the option to utilize the Vertical Mixed Use (VMU) standards of this subchapter if recommended by the neighborhood and/or approved by the City Council. The process to determine which properties may utilize the VMU standards on Riverside has been put on hold pending this Corridor Plan. The development of VMU buildings can allow for some development bonuses for the site if various standards are met.

Exhibit A.21:
Current Zoning Map

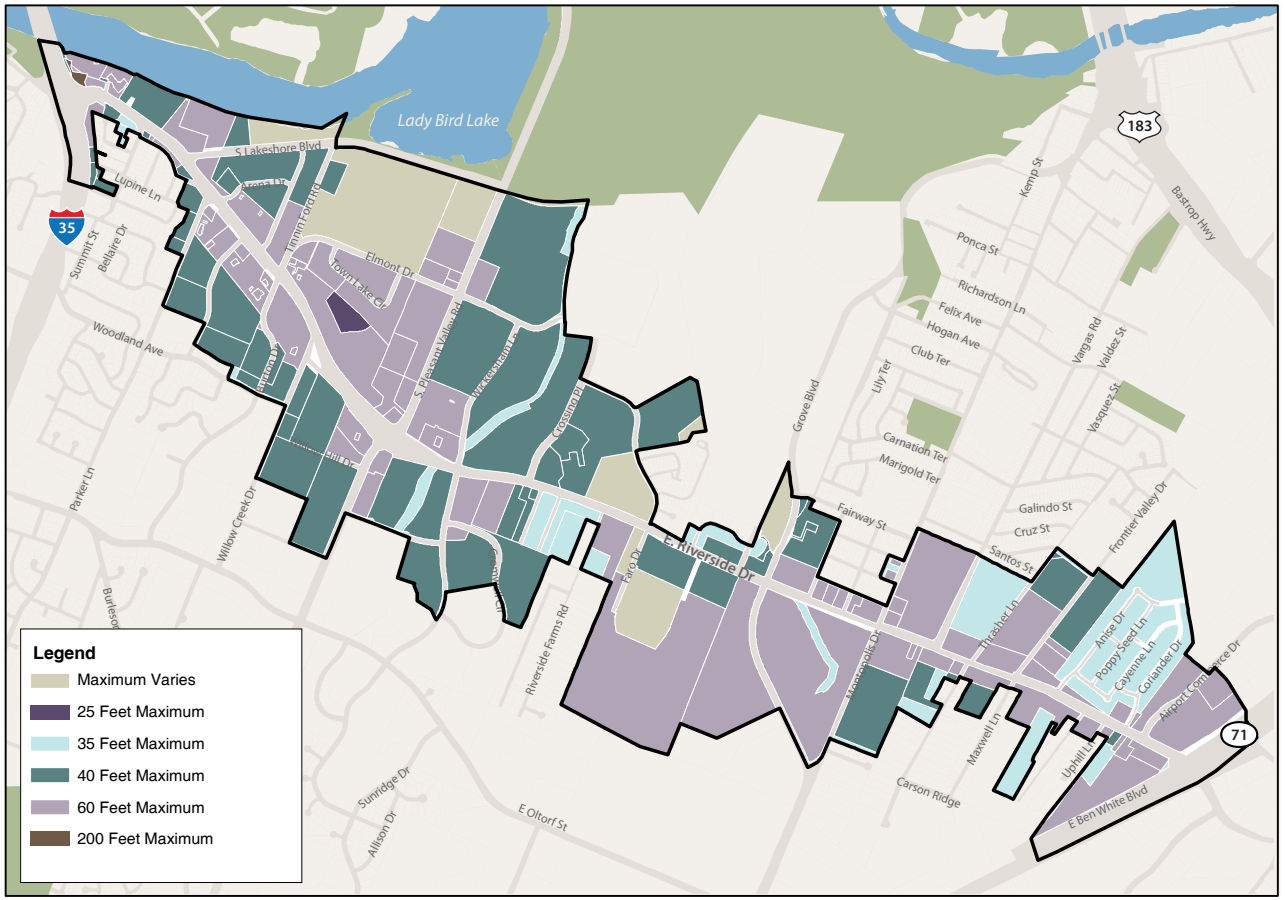


(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Study Area Building Heights

The existing zoning regulations establish maximum permitted heights for properties within the Study Area. These maximums are indicated in Exhibit A.22. Generally, along East Riverside Drive, the current maximum allowable height for buildings is 60 feet (approximately 5-6 stories). In the study area, there are also properties with 25, 35, 40, and 200 feet height limits.

Exhibit A.22:
Maximum Building Heights Map



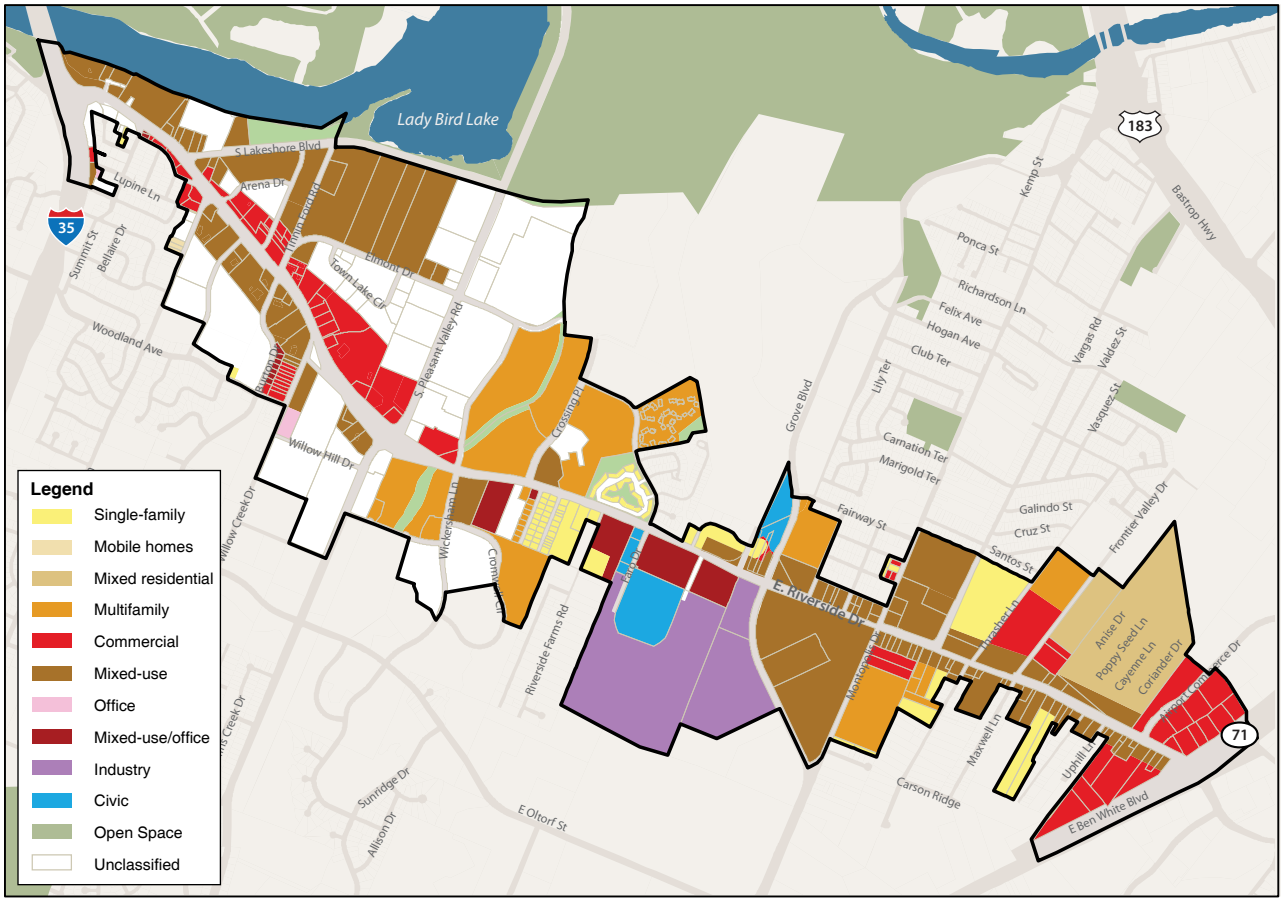
(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Neighborhood Plan Future Land Use

The East Riverside-Oltorf Combined (EROC) and Montopolis Neighborhood Plans include desired future land uses for their respective planning areas. The purpose of the Future Land Use Maps (FLUMs) is to guide City Council decisions regarding land use and zoning. The combined FLUM's of each of the Plans as they overlap with the East Riverside Corridor study area are shown in Exhibit A.23.

The most prevalent suggested future land use in the Corridor is Mixed Use, which is recommended along much of the length of East Riverside Drive. In addition, many parcels in the Corridor were designated as Commercial along Ben White Boulevard and East Riverside Drive near South Pleasant Valley Road. A number of parcels were not designated on the EROC NP future land use map because staff was directed to develop a new zoning tool to address those parcels.

Exhibit A.23:
Neighborhood Plan Future Land Use Map

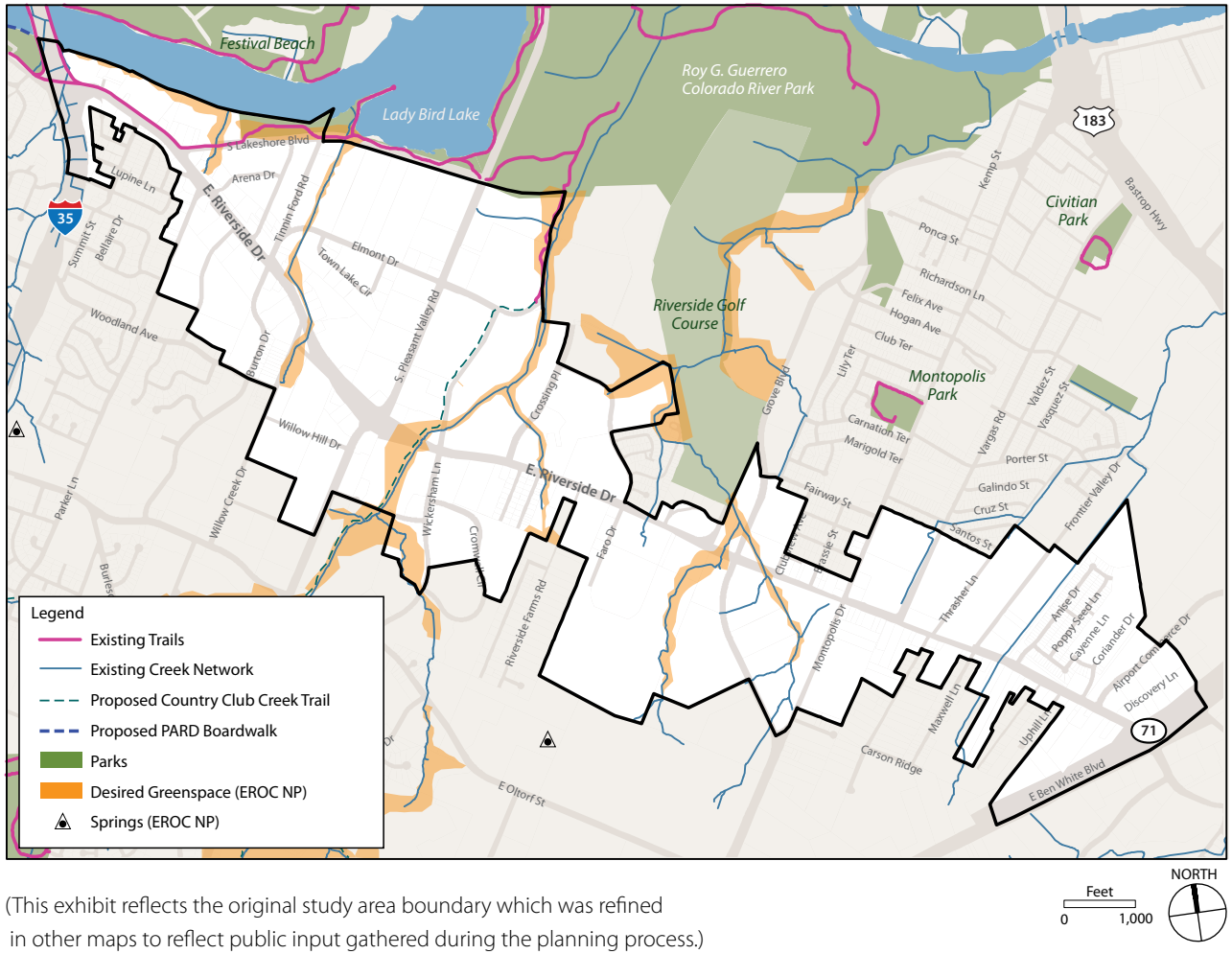


(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Community Open Space & Amenities

Numerous parks and open space amenities are located near or within the East Riverside Corridor area or have already been proposed for the Study Area in previous planning efforts (see Exhibit A.24). Lady Bird Lake and the trails along the Lake continue to be a major attraction to the public. Another open space attraction in the area is the publicly accessible Riverside Golf Course. A few neighborhood parks exist within the Montopolis neighborhood. These parks contain a pool, recreation center, playgrounds and open space. In addition, the Roy Guerrero Colorado River Park, located to the north of the Study Area, includes several ball fields, walking and biking trails, creek systems, and natural open spaces. Major future improvements include additional sports fields, a children's play area, trails, and river overlooks. In addition, the East Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan (EROC NP), also identified areas of desired green space for the area, which correspond with the existing 100-year floodplain. The proposed Country Club Creek Trail and Lady Bird Lake Boardwalk would provide the Corridor with natural access to existing outdoor amenities near to the Study Area and beyond. Creek systems are located in several locations within and beyond the Corridor. The existing open space amenities were reviewed and the desired open spaces incorporated as much as possible in the East Riverside Corridor Plan.

Exhibit A.24:
Existing & Proposed Area Amenities Map



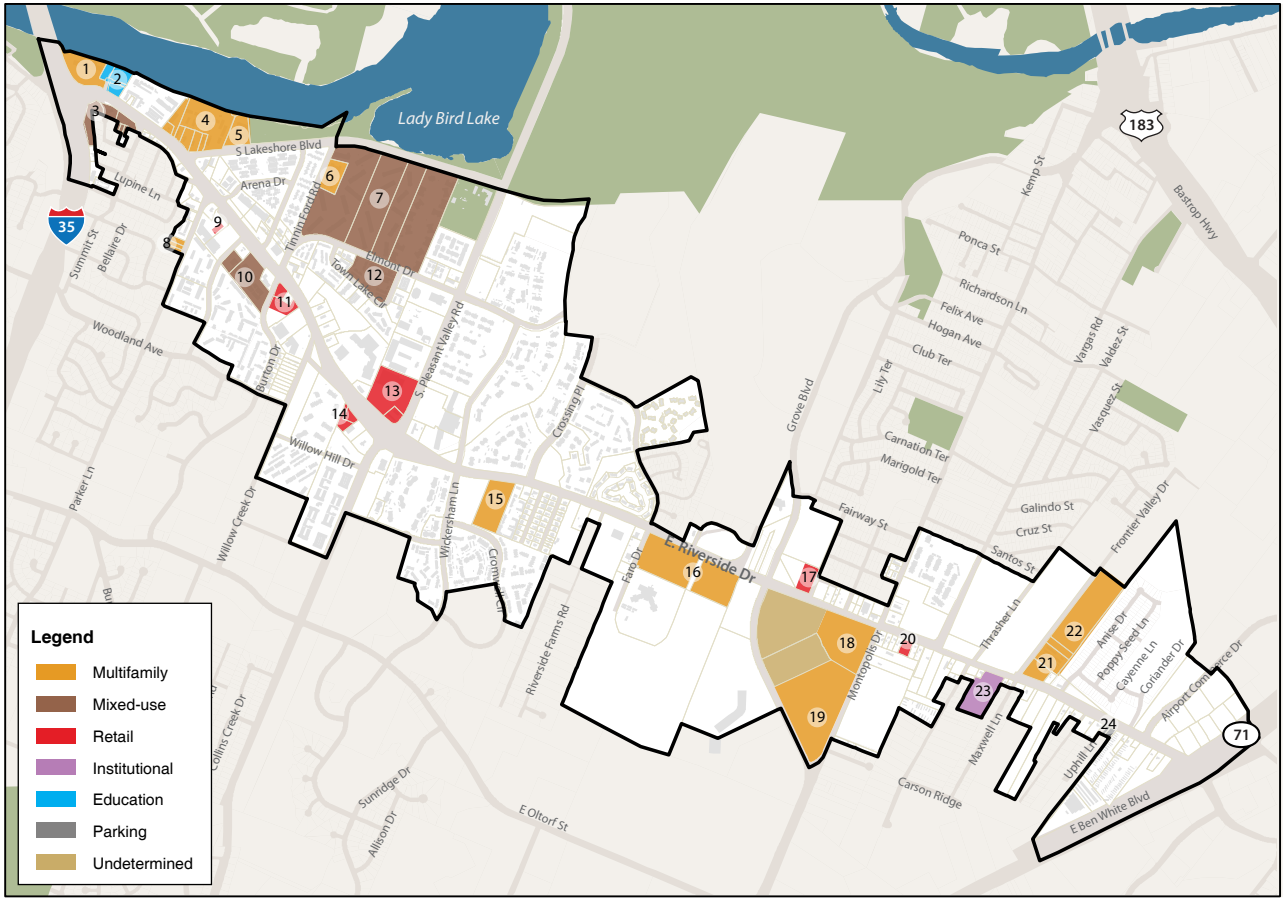
(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Area Development/ Proposed Development

Numerous new developments are underway in the East Riverside Corridor Study Area (as can be seen in Exhibit A.25). Most of these projects are close to the IH 35 intersection of Riverside Drive, near Lady Bird Lake. These projects range from retail and educational facilities to mixed use development, condos, and apartments. Some of these projects are in the construction process while others are still in the design and permitting stage. The following information is based on information available at the time of plan research in 2008 and is subject to change.

1. Star Riverside - 251 condos, retail first floor of one building
2. Acton School of Business – 10,000 sq. ft. school for MBA program
3. Schuler Family Trust - Mixed Use Development, 60 condos, 45,000 sq. ft. of commercial/retail, 30,000 sq. ft. of office and multi level parking garage
4. AMLI -375 apartments and condos
5. Mac Pike and Wally Scott of the Sutton Co. - Convert 48 apartments to condos and add additional 40-50 condos
6. Town Lake Village-Apartments - Converted to 74 condos
7. Cypress Plan 1 - Demolish Lakeview Apartments and Chelsea on Town Lake Apartments Homes and build a mixed use development with up to 2,500 apartments, condos, and townhomes
8. Parker Lane Condos
9. Libertad Bank
10. Rivertown Mall - Mixed use building to include 300 apartments plus condos or townhomes
11. Long John Silvers and Autozone
12. Cypress Plan 2 – demolish London Square Apartments and redevelop property
13. HEB – Demolish existing store and build a new 100,000 sq. ft. store
14. La Hacienda
15. Mirada Condos
16. Riverside East and West - Multi-Family development with 22 townhouses and 105 apartments
17. Dollar General
18. Rivermont Place – Mixed use development to include 142 rental units and 2,000 sq. ft of retail and 20,000 neighborhood retail
19. Grand Tract Loft Apartments
20. Restaurant and Storefront
21. Arbors at Riverside - Four 2-story buildings with 32 units, mostly 1 bedroom
22. Santora Apartments - Multi-Family development with 192 apartments
23. Riverside Nursing Home
24. Riverside Parking Lot

Exhibit A.25:
Development Projects & Proposals Map



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.

These projects were current at time of plan research in 2008 and are subject to change)

Overlay Districts

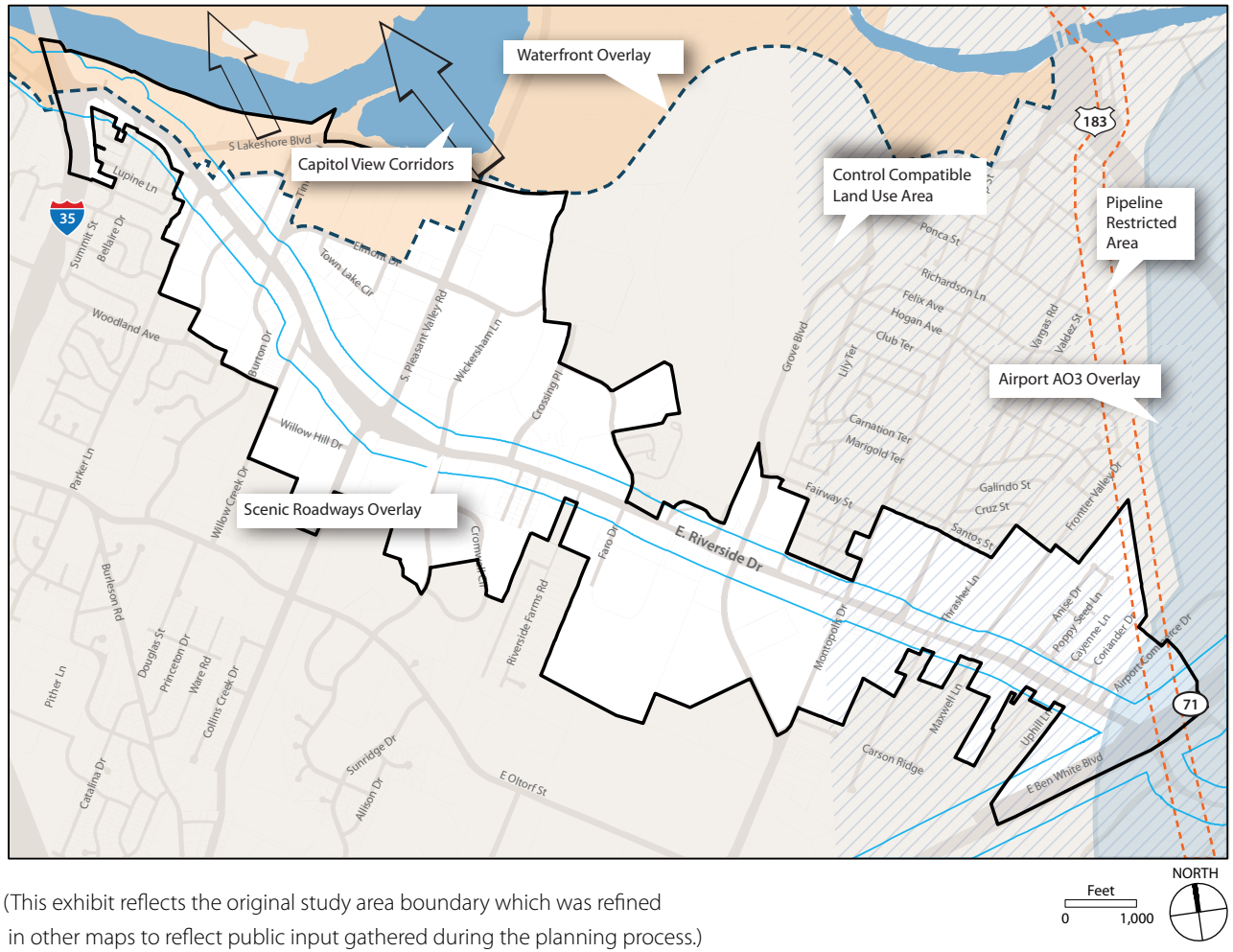
The East Riverside Corridor area contains several existing zoning overlay districts, including the Waterfront, Capital View Corridor, Airport AO3 and Controlled Compatible Land Use Area, and Scenic Roadway Overlay districts. The overlay districts that apply to the Corridor are shown in Exhibit A.26.

In general the Waterfront Overlay District regulates the height of a building and setbacks from Lady Bird Lake. A portion of the Study Area along Lady Bird Lake and the Colorado River is located in the Waterfront Overlay district. Recently, Austin City Council created a Waterfront Overlay Task Force, which developed recommendations on the implementation of the Waterfront Overlay. City staff is tasked with translating these recommendations into draft ordinances.

The portion of the Capitol View Corridor (CVC) Overlay District's purpose is, "to preserve the view of the State Capitol Building by limiting the height of structures located in the capitol view corridors." In a capitol view corridor, a structure may not exceed the height of the plane delineating the view corridor. The ERC study area includes two points from which views of the Capital building mus be preserved: the intersection of S. Pleasant Valley Rd. at Lakeshore Dr. and at Lakeshore Dr. west of Tinnen Ford Dr. Because these points are on the north edge of the study area on public parkland, the capitol view corridors would not limit development heights withing the ERC study area.

In addition to the various Overlay Districts that apply to the Corridor, the eastern most portion of the Study Area also contains a Pipeline Restricted Area. A Pipeline Restricted area includes an area within 25 feet of a hazardous pipeline and an area within a hazardous pipeline easement. This overlay restricts the use and

Exhibit A.26:
Overlay Districts Map



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

location of new structures in proximity to the Pipeline Restricted Area.

The Airport Controlled Compatible Land Use Area (CCLUA) is subject to certain limitations to eliminate hazards to airport operations. Hazards to airport operations include any land use, structure, or object of natural growth located within the CCLUA that exceeds height limitations, creates electronic interference with aircraft navigation or radio communications, inhibits a pilot's ability to distinguish airport lighting from other lighting, results in glare in the eyes of a pilot, impairs visibility in the vicinity of the airport, creates a wildlife hazard (i.e., bird attractants), or otherwise endangers or interferes with the landing, taking off, or maneuvering of aircraft is prohibited. Residential use is permitted.

The Scenic Roadway Overlay in general regulates the qualities of signage that is allowable within the overlay.

Properties within the Corridor are bound by all applicable Overlay Districts and Restricted Areas.

APPENDIX B

VISIONING PROCESS

VISIONING: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS
VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY
WHAT PEOPLE WANT
VPS AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS
FULL VISIONING RESULTS
VISION TRANSLATION WORKSHOP RESULTS
PROFESSIONAL DESIGN CHARRETTE

Visioning: Public Participation Process

Public participation through a visioning process is critical for the future successful implementation of any plan. No one knows a community better than the people who live and work there. By sponsoring this process, the City of Austin provided an opportunity for community residents, visitors, business operators, developers and land owners to participate in the creation of the future plan for the East Riverside Corridor. This unique process, which utilized a variety of meetings and two public visioning sessions, had extraordinary civic interest demonstrated by all those who participated.

Obtaining the community's input is a hallmark of good planning. The A. Nelessen Associates (ANA) Team was selected as the consultant team for the project due to its use of innovative public involvement techniques. Three primary techniques were used to gather information from the public: the Visual Preference SurveyTM (VPS™), a Demographic, Market and Policy Questionnaire, and the Vision Translation Workshop (see section titled "Visual Preference Survey" below for more detail on the VPS).

The outreach process began with meetings between the ANA Team, the City's technical staff, and community leaders and stakeholders. Local participants in the early outreach process included those who have been active in the planning or development process in the area, such as individuals who contributed to the East Riverside/Oltorf Combined (EROC) Neighborhood Plan, the Montopolis Neighborhood Plan, business owners, landowners, developers, and other community interest groups. The ANA Team had a meeting with these stakeholders and asked about their ambitions for the Study Area to gain a better understanding of their attitudes and beliefs relative to future potential changes in the area. These meetings identified considerations that needed be addressed while developing concepts for the Study Area, a list of existing conditions to help the Team better understand the area, and a series of properties within the Study Area with the most likelihood of changing in the near future. Feedback from these stakeholders was incorporated into the Visioning Process.

In addition to the early outreach meeting with community leaders and stakeholders, the consultant team also held a meeting with the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) - staff from the Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department, staff from various other City of Austin departments, and representatives from non-City of Austin public entities in July 2008. During the meeting, the TAG participants engaged in planning exercises dealing with traffic and circulation, infrastructure improvements, potential transit connections and design guidelines. The TAG and initial stakeholder meetings provided valuable feedback for the consultant and City of Austin staff to prepare for the public visioning process.

The East Riverside Corridor Visioning Process included two intensive workshops. The first, a 'Beta Test', was administered to the stakeholder group to test the visioning ideas that would be administered to the public. The second was presented to the general public.

A 'Beta Test' Visioning Workshop, facilitated by A. Nelessen Associates, was held in August 2008 at Baty Elementary School, and a full-scale public Community Visioning Workshop was held at Travis High School in September of 2008. In addition, a small-scaled VPS™ and Questionnaire was posted on the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan website for several weeks. Nearly 150 people participated in the two workshops, and 450 people participated in the on-line survey, for a total of approximately 600 people. All who participated in the visioning process were crucial to help define the visual and spatial characteristics desired for East Riverside Corridor. Attendees at each meeting completed a Visual Preference Survey and Community Questionnaire and participated in a Vision Translation Workshop. The Vision Translation Workshop indicates where people want the elements illustrated in positive images to be located and where, based on the negative images, redevelopment should be focused. The input from all participants was used to generate the concept plans. The results from both the stakeholder and public workshops, as well as the online survey results, are compiled later in this section. The combined results are described in the following summary of the Visioning Process.

The concept plans were further refined based on public input gathered at the "Did We Get it Right" public meeting held in November 2008.

Every aspect of the public's participation was integral to the formation of this plan. These elements are described on the next pages.

Visual Preference Survey

The Visual Preference Survey™ (VPS™) is a planning technique that brings residents, business owners and community leaders together to evaluate existing conditions and options for the future. The VPS™ process allows participants to identify and explore what they would like their community to look and feel like in the future by evaluating a series of images.

The VPS™ was built from an extensive set of local images, alternatives from other locations, and digital simulations. The local images were captured through fieldwork in Austin, while development alternative images were assembled from the ANA image library. Participants were asked to rate the image from a +10 to a -10 based on the question "How appropriate is the image you are seeing now and in the future for the East Riverside Corridor?"

Participants were asked to rate images from +10 to -10 on a computer answer sheet. Images were presented in a variety of categories including streets, buildings, and mobility. The results were tabulated by mean and standard deviation. The mean is the average image score generated from the participants at two meetings and those who took the survey online. The standard deviation is an approximate range of the participants' scores, identifying the highest and lowest score given for an image.

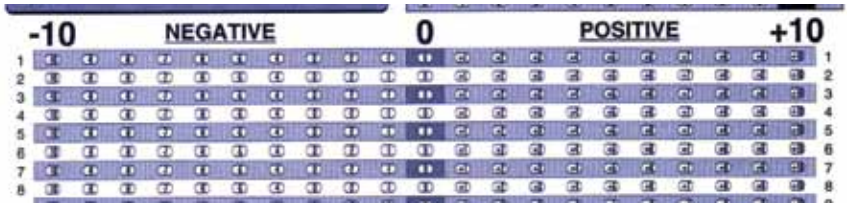
The Visual Preference Survey™ was composed of eleven categories:

- Streets
- Pedestrian Realm
- Development: Commercial
- Development: Mixed-Use
- Development: Residential
- Parking
- Signage
- Parks, Plazas, and Open Space
- Placemaking
- Sustainability
- Mobility

The highest rated images represent the visual and spatial characteristics desired for the East Riverside Corridor Area. These highest rated images, along with the results of the questionnaire and the synthesis of the Vision Translation Workshop, were used to create the recommendations presented in this Master Plan. When the positive results from the visioning survey and the other inputs are translated into two and three dimensions, a development plan emerges that illustrates the idealized future for the Area.

After finishing the image-based VPS™, survey participants were asked to complete a multiple-choice Demographic, Market, and Policy questionnaire. The questions were specifically tailored to the East Riverside Corridor and allowed the consultant team to gather quantitative data that correlated with VPS™ data. Responses to these questions were critical to fully understanding the demographics of those who participated and how they responded to the images. These questions ranged in subject but primarily dealt with current conditions and a variety of development alternatives and priorities. Topics included shopping patterns, economic development, traffic and commuting patterns, ratings of public facilities, neighborhoods and housing, urban design, and open space.

The image below is an example of a scantron survey form that is electronically scanned. Results are calculated by mean and standard deviation to reveal positive and negative imagery.



What People Want

The intensity of the reactions to each image in the VPS and the answers to related questions provides direction for future planning, zoning, development, and redevelopment options. Two statistics are used to analyze each image; the mean (the first number shown in the top right corner of each image) is the average image score generated from the participants at two meetings and if applicable, online, who took the survey. The standard deviation (the second number in parentheses) is an approximate range of the participants' scores. To best understand the degree of consensus, add or subtract the standard deviation from the mean to approximate the range. The narrower the range, the greater the consensus towards the image. For example the slide titled, "Sidewalk with Green Buffer" received an average score of +7 with a standard deviation of 3. Add and subtract 3 from 7 and the range of responses for that question is from +4 to +10, therefore it was deduced that the participants strongly agreed that sidewalks with green buffers were appropriate for the area and should be recommended in the plan.

Responses from the VPS™ and community questionnaire provide an understanding of what the community envisions as appropriate for the future of the East Riverside area. Each image was rated based on the question, "How appropriate or inappropriate is the image you are seeing for now and in the future of East Riverside Corridor?"

Highly-rated images illustrate pieces of the collective vision for the future of the area. The most highly valued elements are the most appropriate for the future of East Riverside Corridor. As the image values decrease, so does the perceived value of the elements in the images.
After the workshop was completed, ANA conducted a detailed examination of each image category. Each image and category was analyzed to determine which land-use, building and street design elements contribute to both positive and negative ratings. The positive VPS™ ratings focused the planning and design goals and objectives and helped define the most appropriate, as well as inappropriate, uses and characteristics for the future of the area.

The results of the questionnaire were separately scanned, analyzed and compared to the image results. Questions were cross-referenced with other questions and images to determine the wants and needs of participants, and to highlight areas of agreement or disagreement. Specific recommendations in this plan were generated from the questionnaire. The combination of policies and pictures proves to be an extremely effective planning tool.
The overall results were calculated by combining the raw data from the stakeholder and public visioning sessions. The overall results present a combined vision of an area that welcomes and encourages pedestrian activity by providing a broad range of commercial retail and residential uses, high quality streetscapes and a robust transit system.

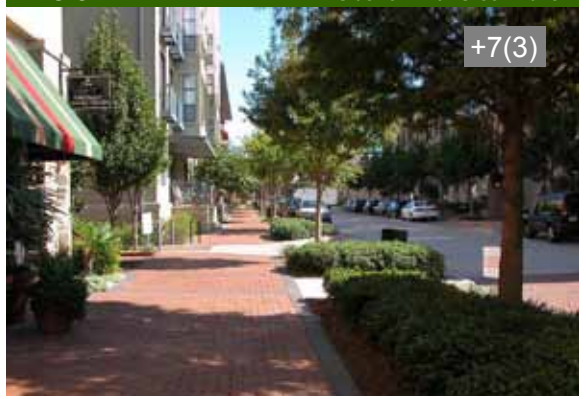
A summary of the VPS and Questionnaire results are provided in the next section, followed by the full results.

Results = 4 (3) ← **Standard Deviation**
↑ **Mean**

Line 1 — Large Scale Existing Signage

Negative images illustrate examples of places which are unacceptable, though having high opportunity for redevelopment (based on rating).

Line 31 — Sidewalk with Green Buffer



Images which received the highest positive ratings in a single category suggest the highest priority for future planning, urban form, and engineering policies.

VPS and Questionnaire Results

Provided below is a sampling of results that influenced the Master Plan, followed by a complete set of images arranged in the order they were delivered in the VPS and complete Questionnaire Results.

Geographic Distribution
48% of participants are property or home owners in the East Riverside Corridor Area. 54% of participants live within 1 mile of the East Riverside Corridor Study Area.

Interest in East Riverside Corridor
For participants that live in the Study Area, one-quarter choose to live there due to the area's proximity to downtown, another quarter choose to live there due to the affordability of the area, 15% for the diversity, 9% for proximity to work, 4% for proximity to Lady Bird Lake, 4% for the availability of services, and 18% for other reasons.

Age and Gender Distribution
Nearly an even split of males and females participated in the survey, with slightly more males than females. Almost two-thirds of the participants were ages 19-55, 13 % were ages 56-66, 3% were 67 and older, and 1% was 18 years old or younger.

Income
Less than 10% of the participants earn less than $25,000 per year, approximately one quarter earn $25,000-$50,000 annually, slightly fewer than half earn $50,000-$100,000, and the rest of the participants earn more than $100,000 per year.

Residency
21% of participants have lived and / or worked in or adjacent to the Study Area for 3 to 8 years. 18% do not live and / or work in or adjacent to the Study Area, 15% have lived and/or worked in or adjacent to the Study Area for between 1-2 years, 15% have lived and/or worked in or adjacent to the Study Area for between 9-20 years, 14% have lived and/or worked in or adjacent to the Study Area for between 20-30 years, 10% have lived and/or worked in or adjacent to the Study Area for over 30 years, and 7% have lived and/or worked in or adjacent to the Study Area for 1 year or less.

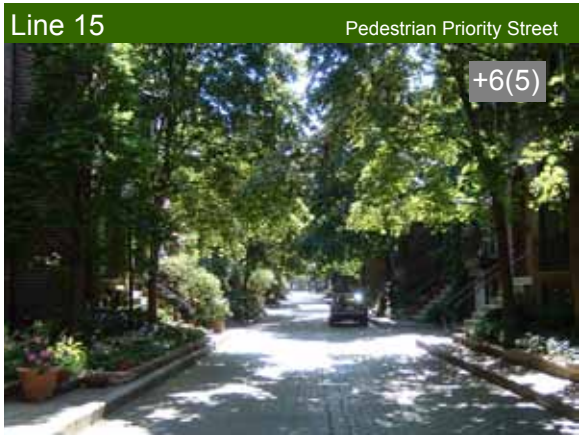
Existing Conditions
About two thirds of participants do not feel that their shopping needs are met in the Study Area. More than three quarters of the participants feel it is not safe or pleasant to walk on the sidewalks along East Riverside Drive and feel that bicycle lanes and paths are insufficient to create a safe method of bicycle travel throughout the Study Area. Over half of the participants think the existing transit options in the area are insufficient; just over one-quarter believe that they are sufficient sometimes.

Of the biggest safety issues in the area (drug dealing/use and burglary), over half of participants feel that if things do not change, they see no opportunity for growth in the area for the future. About half of participants feel that the number one thing to do to ameliorate crime and safety issues in the area is to redevelop blighted areas; over a quarter feel the best solution would be to increase physical police presence.

Streets
More than half of participants would like to see East Riverside Drive become "main street" type area in selective locations with a transit stop and slowly moving traffic. More than three-quarters of participants believe that a new transportation model (adding pedestrian streets, adding a transit system, landscaping, bike lanes and/or paths, wide sidewalks, etc.) is the most appropriate way to mitigate traffic congestion along the East Riverside Corridor.

Streets form a community's most important public spaces. Both the initial and overall impressions of place are strongly influenced by the perceived character of its streets. All existing streets shown in the VPS were rated inappropriate for the future of Riverside Drive, except for one image showing a landscaped median. Significant improvements should be made to all existing streets in the Study Area.

Pedestrian Realm
The positive rated images represent the streetscapes people feel most comfortable walking in. The negative scores for all existing pedestrian realm images demonstrate a unified desire for improvements to the pedestrian realm.



Development Options

Most of the participants support or highly support a range of housing types (ex. Condos, Apartments, Duplexes, Townhouses, Single Family Structures) in order to offer different housing options throughout the Study Area. A majority of participants agree or strongly agree that "Underutilized surface parking lots can provide space for infill and redevelopment of tomorrow."

Over three quarters of the participants either support or highly support concentrated infill development around transit stops. Participants believe that the following community benefits are the most important for the area, and could be provided in exchange for increased height or density: provision of open space, streetscaping, construction of bicycle facilities, and green building.

Development: Commercial

Buildings closest to the rail stations should have retail and services at the ground floor. Most of participants think grocery stores are either appropriate or extremely appropriate as an amenity for the East Riverside Corridor Area. A majority of participants would like to see more restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, and local retail in the area.

Development: Mixed Use

Mixed use building developments combine more than one use in a single building. The highly rated images suggest that mixing office, retail, and residential is desired by the participants of the survey.

Development: Residential

The results of the VPS and questionnaire indicate residential buildings should provide a mix of housing options. The highly rated images suggest that well designed residential, whether single family or multiple unit buildings, is desired by those who completed the survey.

Parking

Creative ways of dealing with parking, such as integrating it into buildings, placing parking underground, or behind buildings as well as parking on the street, are appropriate for the Study Area. The Area currently has a large amount of surface parking, the images of which received the most negative values and are inappropriate for the area. Placement and design of parking is critical so that it doesn't overwhelm and divide the pedestrian.

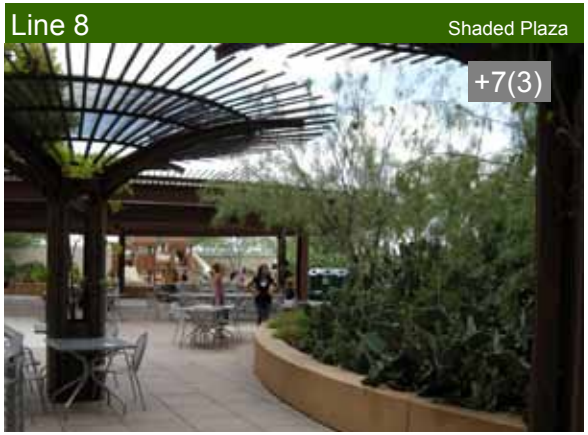
Just under half of participants believe it is appropriate or extremely appropriate to reduce parking spaces required for buildings.

Signage

Pedestrian-scale signage coordinated with building designs was positively-rated by participants, while billboards and automobile-scale signs were negatively-rated. Information kiosks directing visitors and residents to sites and areas of interest in and around the East Riverside Corridor rated positively in the survey.

Parks and Plazas

Most participants believe it is appropriate or extrememly appropriate to have open space, including parks and plazas in the Study Area. More than three-quarters of those who took the survey believe landscaping and streetscapes are appropriate or extremely appropriate for the Area.



Placemaking

Positively-rated placemaking images included murals, public art, signature lighting, gateways features, and landmark buildings.

Sustainability

Some of the highest rated images from the VPS™ illustrate the participants' desire for green technology and strategies.

Mobility

The East Riverside Corridor has the potential to become a great pedestrian-activity area in Austin and the high score from the survey for walking demonstrates the community's desire to create a more pedestrian-friendly place. Bicycle lanes and paths, along with transit and energy efficient vehicles can help the Corridor to become a center of sustainable transportation options for Austin and Texas. Providing alternatives to the car that are convenient is especially important for young and old residents as well as those who want to live close to work, shopping and recreation, and those who wish to live a more sustainable and urban lifestyle.

Results from the VPS indicate that nearly 90% of participants support or highly support a new light rail or streetcar system from the airport (ABIA) to downtown and over half would use a future light rail or streetcar once a week or more. Most of the participants believe that bicycling is an important or very important mode of alternative transportation for the Corridor's future. This translated into proposing a greater number of bike lanes and varied conditions, such as on-street lanes or bicycle trails.

Most participants believe that the Study Area should be both walkable and bikeable in the future. Over half of the participants would support signalized crosswalks at all intersections. Under half of the participants support slower traffic within the Study Area and just under half support traffic calming in certain locations.

Full Visioning Results

Combined Results

Visual Preference Survey™
East Riverside Corridor Master Plan

Beta Test: August 14, 2008

Public Workshop: September 17, 2008

Web Survey: September 18 – October 20, 2008

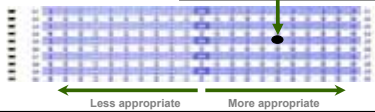
Visual Preference Survey™ (VPS)

Participants were asked to rank the following images based on the question:

How appropriate or inappropriate is the image you are seeing – now and in the future – for the East Riverside Corridor

Visual Preference Survey™ (VPS)

Values were recorded from **-10** to **+10**. Participants filled in the circle on the correct line that corresponded to their image response. For example, if participants felt the image to the right should get a +5, the would have filled in the +5 on the corresponding line number.



Visual Preference Survey™ (VPS)

-5(4)

Negative rated images illustrate visual and spatial characteristics of what people (survey sample) do not want and will not and would like to see changed.

7(3)

Images which received high **Positive** ratings illustrate the visual and spatial characteristics that people want and highest values within a single category are the highest priority for future planning and engineering policies.

STREETS

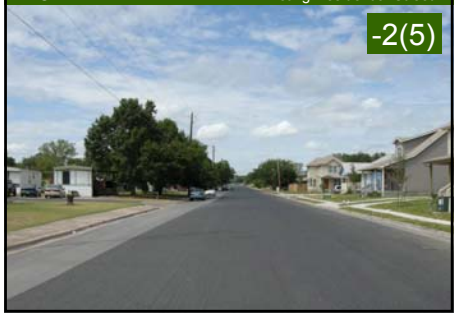
Streets are a city's most important public spaces.

Line 1 Existing Riverside Drive near Kenneth Ave.

-5(5)

Line 2 Existing Residential Street

-2(5)



Line 3 "Main Street" with Brick Paver and Median Parking

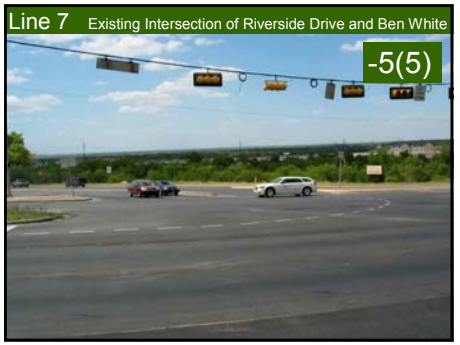
4(5)

Line 4 Existing Riverside Drive with Landscaped Median

1(5)

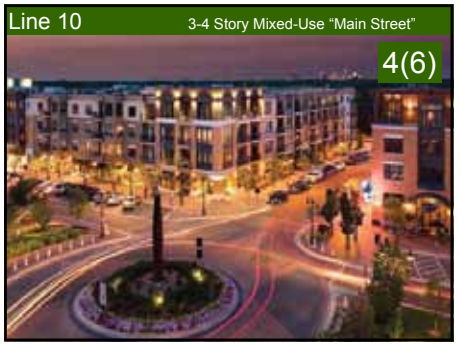

Line 5
Landscaped Boulevard with Parallel Parking
5(5)


Line 6
Existing Riverside Drive with Pebble Median
-5(5)


Line 7
Existing Intersection of Riverside Drive and Ben White
-5(5)


Line 8
Existing Riverside Drive with Views to Austin
-3(5)

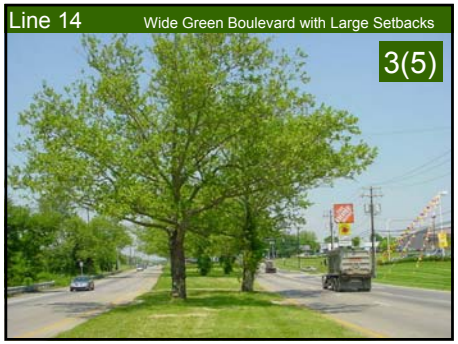

Line 9
Street with Transit in Median
7(5)

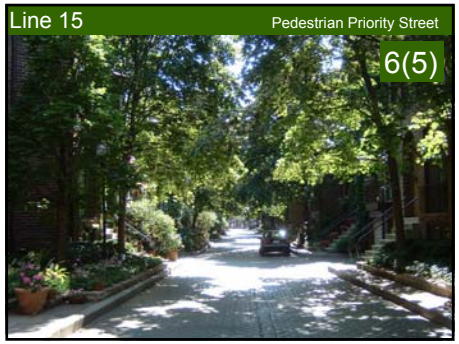

Line 10
3-4 Story Mixed-Use "Main Street"
4(6)


Line 11
Tree-Lined Residential Street with Sidewalks
7(3)

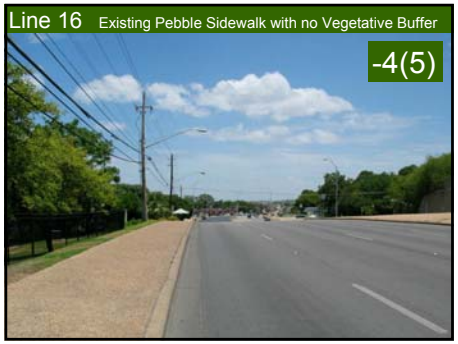

Line 12
Boulevard with Dedicated Bicycle & Pedestrian Lanes
3(4)


Line 13
Buildings at Transit Stop with Views to Downtown
6(4)


Line 14
Wide Green Boulevard with Large Setbacks
3(5)


Line 15
Pedestrian Priority Street
6(5)


PEDESTRIAN REALM
The sidewalk design and treatment must encourage people to want to walk.


Line 16
Existing Pebble Sidewalk with no Vegetative Buffer
-4(5)


Line 17
Existing Residential Sidewalk
-4(5)


Line 18
Residential with Wide Sidewalk along Park
6(4)


Line 19
Existing Path, No Sidewalk
-7(4)


Line 20
Wide Sidewalk
5(4)


Line 21
Existing Sidewalk with Retaining Wall
-5(5)

Line 22 Retail Sidewalk with Landscape Buffer 5(4)

Line 23 Shaded Pedestrian Retail Mall 5(4)

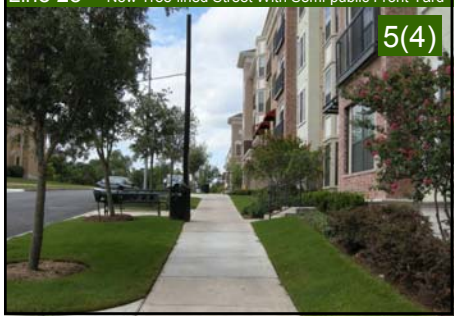
Line 24 Pergola Covered Walkway 6(4)

Line 25 Traditional Arcade 5(5)

Line 26 "Artistic" Crosswalk 5(5)

Line 27 Covered Mixed Use Pedestrian Street 4(5)

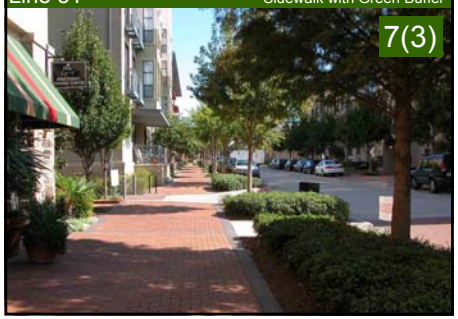
Line 28 New Tree-lined Street With Semi-public Front Yard 5(4)



Line 29 Sidewalk with Outdoor Seating Buffer 6(4)

Line 30 Center Street Transit Stop with Step Up Platform 2(4)

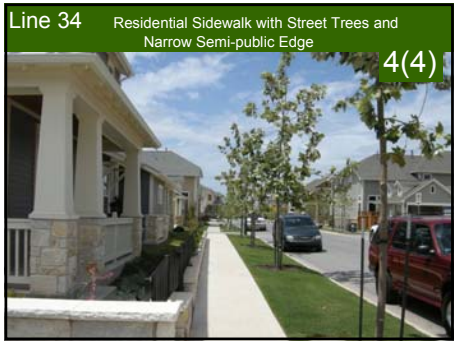
Line 31 Sidewalk with Green Buffer



Line 32 Brick Paved Crossing with Textured Intersection

Line 33 Decorative Identifying Sidewalk Treatment

Line 34 Residential Sidewalk with Street Trees and Narrow Semi-public Edge

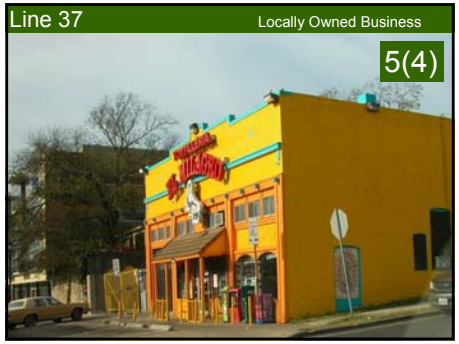


Line 35 Center Street Transit Stop with On-grade Platform

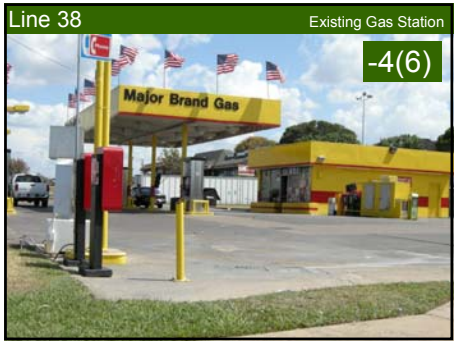
DEVELOPMENT: Commercial

Line 36 Existing Strip Mall

Line 37 Locally Owned Business



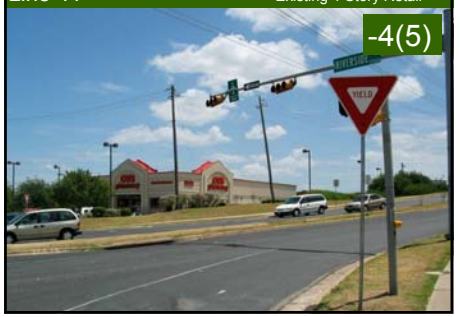
Line 38 Existing Gas Station



Line 39 Corner Emphasis Retail

Line 40 Office Building in Campus-Like Setting

Line 41 Existing 1 Story Retail



Line 42 Rustic Restaurant with Outdoor Seating

Line 43 Single Story "Eclectic" Retail

Line 44 Big Box Establishment

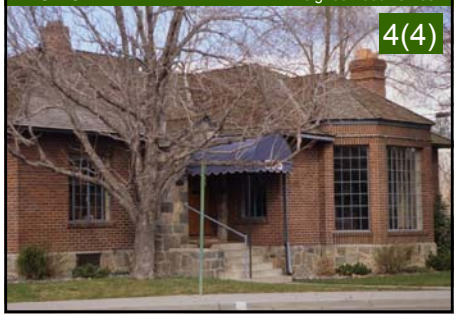
Line 45 Retrofitted Commercial Building

Line 46 Existing Industrial/Office

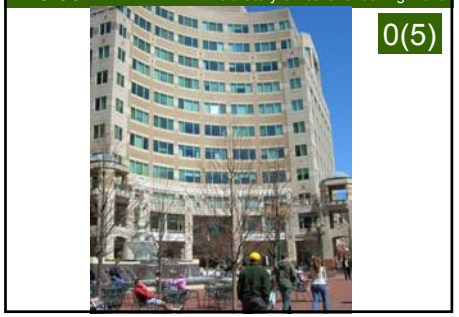
Line 47 Interior Courtyard in a Commercial Building

Line 48 "Home" Office Building

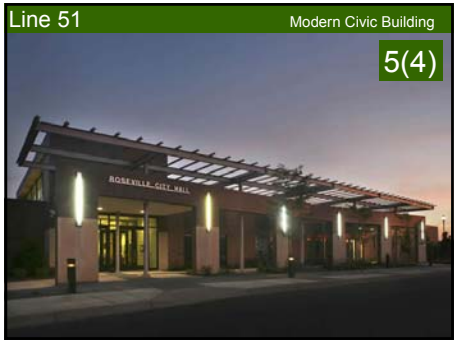
Line 49 "Neighborhood" Office



Line 50 Multi Story Office Overlooking Plaza



Line 51 Modern Civic Building



Line 52 Existing Civic Building

DEVELOPMENT: Mixed-Use

More than one use (residential, retail, office, etc.) within one building.

Line 53 Mixed-Use Office/Retail

Line 54 Multi-story with Architectural Definitions

Line 55 3-4 Story Residential/Retail

Line 56 5-6 Story Mixed Use at Transit Stop

Line 57 Multi Story Residential/Retail

Line 58 Main Street with Retail, Office, and Residential

Line 59 Multi Story Modern Retail/Residential

DEVELOPMENT: Residential

Line 60 Existing Garden Apartments

Line 61 Small Lot Single Family Housing

Line 62 Existing Mobile Homes

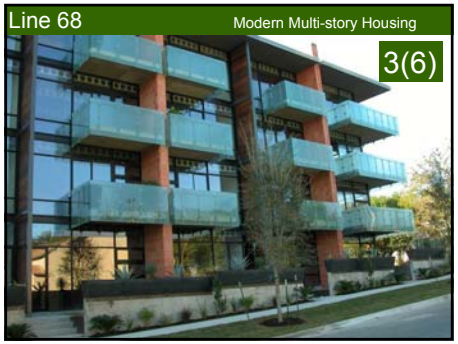
Line 63 Existing Multi-family Rehabbed Housing


Line 64
Traditional Multi-Story Housing
5(5)

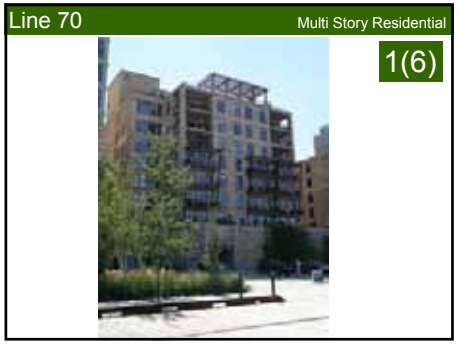

Line 65
Existing Single Family House
3(5)


Line 66
Existing Multi-family Student Housing
1(5)


Line 67
Existing Single Family Housing
-2(6)


Line 68
Modern Multi-story Housing
3(6)

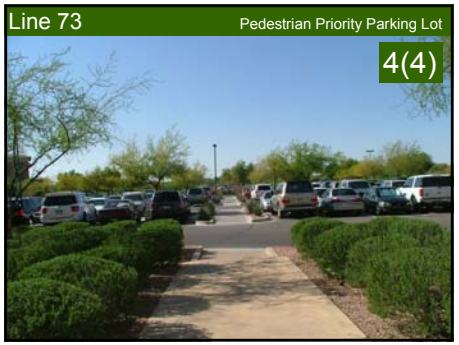

Line 69
Townhouse-Like Multi Story Residential
1(5)

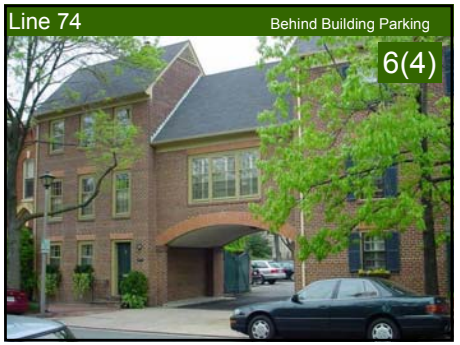

Line 70
Multi Story Residential
1(6)


Line 71
Housing with Interior Green Courtyard
7(4)

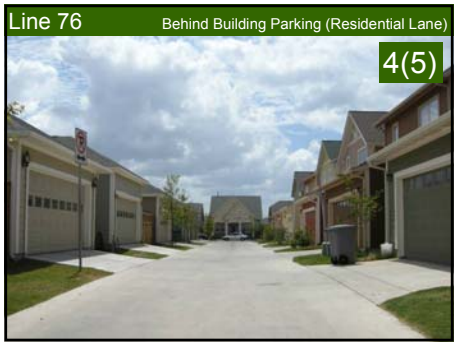

PARKING


Line 72
Existing Surface Parking Lot
-7(5)

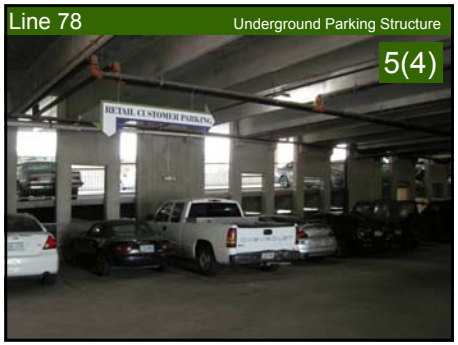

Line 73
Pedestrian Priority Parking Lot
4(4)


Line 74
Behind Building Parking
6(4)

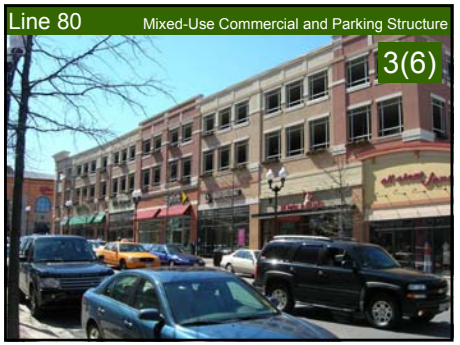

Line 75
On-Street Parallel Parking
2(5)


Line 76
Behind Building Parking (Residential Lane)
4(5)


Line 77
Above Ground Parking Structure
2(5)

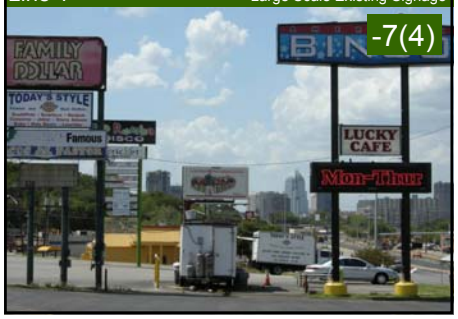

Line 78
Underground Parking Structure
5(4)


Line 79
Diagonal Parking
3(5)


Line 80
Mixed-Use Commercial and Parking Structure
3(6)

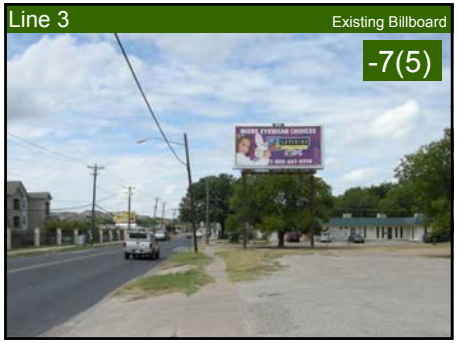
SIGNAGE

Line 1 — Large Scale Existing Signage

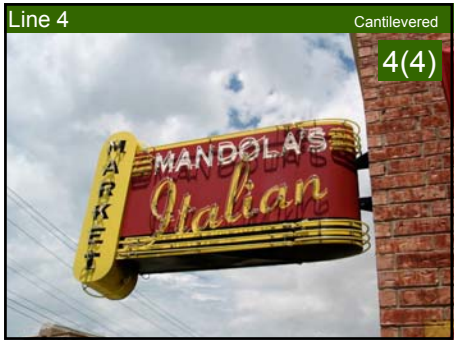


Line 2 — Residential On-Building

Line 3 — Existing Billboard



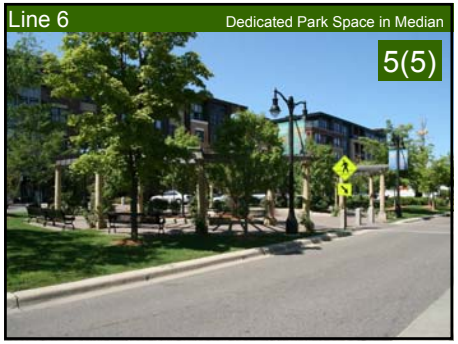
Line 4 — Cantilevered



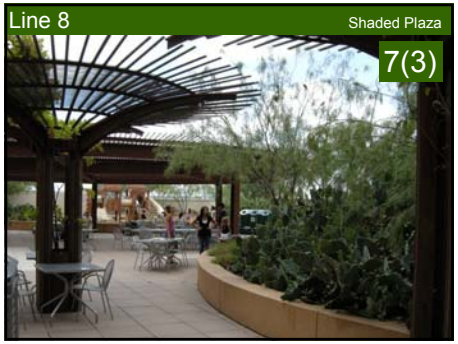
Line 5 — Information Kiosk

PLAZAS, PARKS, & OPEN SPACE

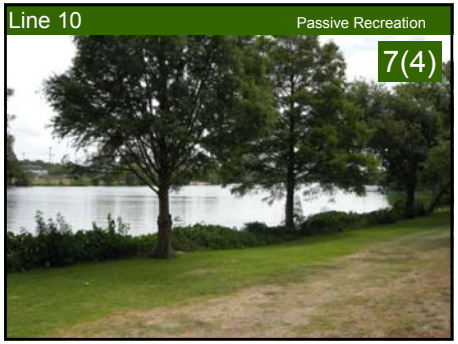
Line 6 — Dedicated Park Space in Median

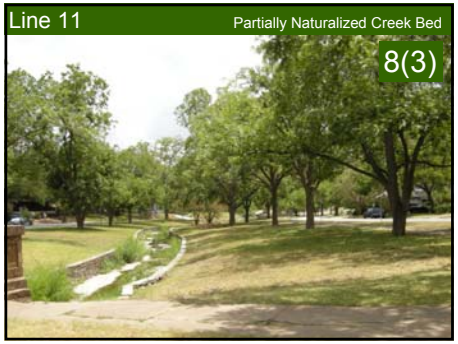


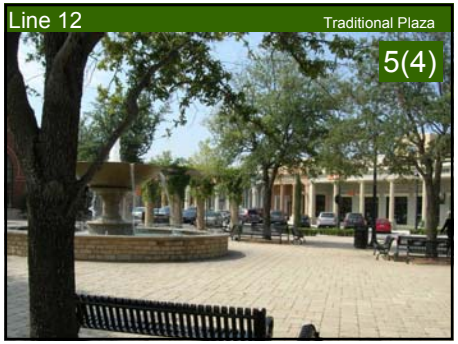
Line 7 — Existing Field and Tree Stand


Line 8
Shaded Plaza
7(3)


Line 9
Water Feature
5(5)


Line 10
Passive Recreation
7(4)


Line 11
Partially Naturalized Creek Bed
8(3)

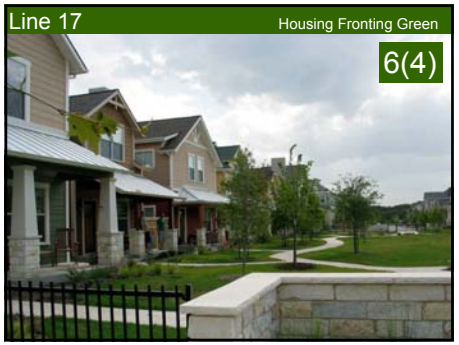

Line 12
Traditional Plaza
5(4)


Line 13
Amphitheater
6(4)


Line 14
Recreational Plaza
7(4)


Line 15
Smaller-Scaled Community Gardens
6(4)
8(3)

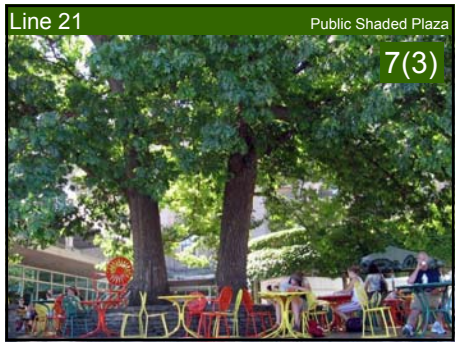

Line 16
Larger-Scale Urban Public Farm
3(4)


Line 17
Housing Fronting Green
6(4)


Line 18
Active Recreation
5(4)


Line 19
Children's Playground
7(3)

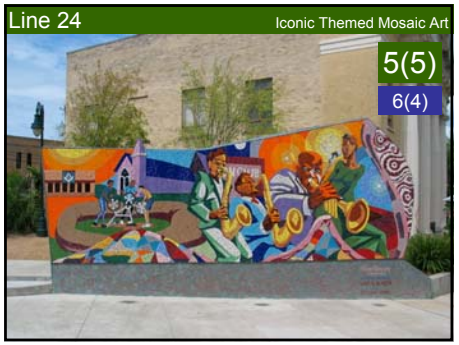

Line 20
Pocket Park
7(3)


Line 21
Public Shaded Plaza
7(3)


PLACEMAKING


Line 22
Iconic Public Art
6(4)


Line 23
Large Water Feature
5(4)


Line 24
Iconic Themed Mosaic Art
5(5)
6(4)

Line 25 Landmark Clock Tower

3(5)

Line 26 Corner Landmark Building

5(4)

i 6(4)

Line 27 Gateway Feature

4(5)

Line 28 Wall Mural

6(4)

Line 29 Identification Lamppost Signage

5(5)

6(4)

SUSTAINABILITY

Line 30 On-building Solar Arrays

7(4)

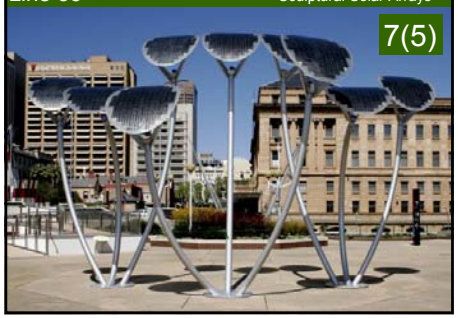
Line 31 Sculptural Wind Turbine

7(4)

Line 32 Green Roof

7(4)

Line 33 Sculptural Solar Arrays



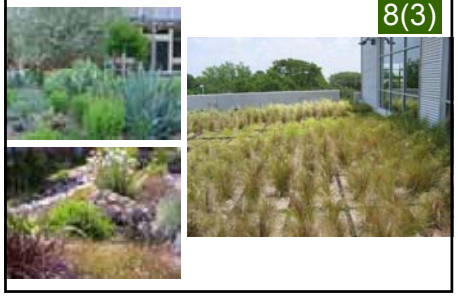
Line 34 Solar Panel Plaza

Line 35 Rain Garden

Line 36 Wet Bio-filtration Pond

Line 37 Rainwater Collection Systems

Line 38 Xeriscaping

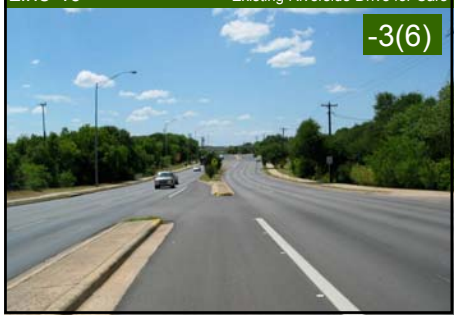


Line 39 Low Impact Drainage

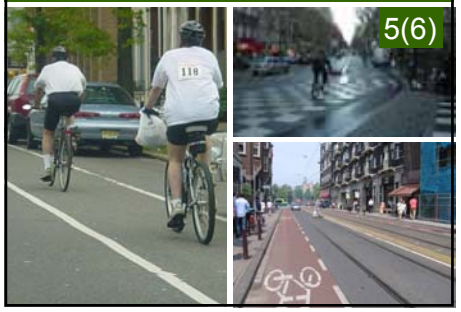
MOBILITY

Options for Movement.

Line 40 Existing Riverside Drive for Cars



Line 41 Bike Lanes

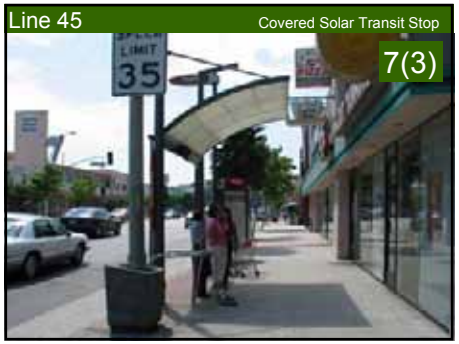


Line 42 Bike Paths

Line 43 Energy Efficient Vehicles

Line 44 E. Riverside Drive for Cars and Pedestrians

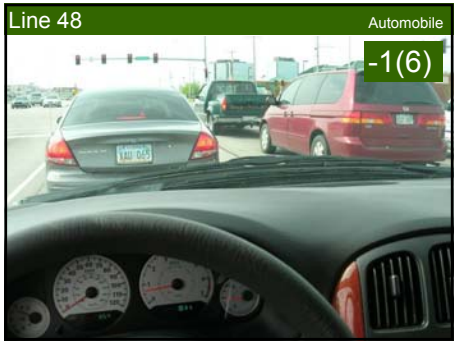
Line 45 Covered Solar Transit Stop



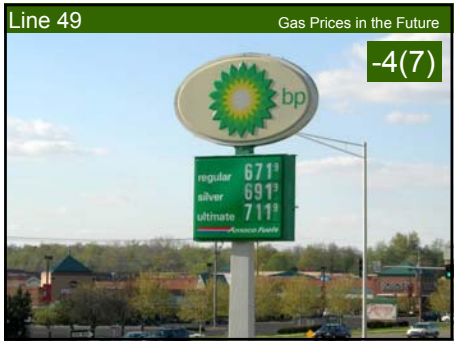
Line 46 E. Riverside Drive Transit Oriented Development

Line 47 Walking

Line 48 Automobile



Line 49 Gas Prices in the Future



Line 50 — Light Rail/Street Car

7(5)

Line 51 — Capitol Metro Bus & Dillo

2(5)

Line 52 — Bus Rapid Transit

4(5)

ID Number _____

East Riverside Corridor Vision Plan

Demographic, Market, & Policy Questionnaire

"Exploring All Options"

A. Nelessen Associates, Inc
Visioning Planning and Design

Sponsored by the City of Austin

The following results are the combined scores from the Beta Questionnaire, the Public Questionnaire and the Questionnaire available on the Web. These questionnaires were administered at the VPS™ sessions on the following dates.

Beta(August 14, 2008), Public(September 17, 2008), and Web(September 18,2008 through October 20, 2008)

This Demographic, Market, and Policy Questionnaire accompanies the Visual Preference Survey (VPS). Your responses are critical to assure that your thoughts regarding policies for the East Riverside Corridor are incorporated into the future Master Plan.

The Visual Preference Survey™ (VPS) and the Demographic, Market, and Policy Questionnaire have been developed specifically for the East Riverside Corridor Study Area. This survey is intended to gauge the community's perceptions and preferences and to test physical planning concepts that relate to development and redevelopment within the East Riverside Corridor Study Area in the City of Austin. We use the results of this public workshop as the foundation for the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan to which you are contributing with your participation.

Directions

1 Please mark your answers to this questionnaire on the **RED FORM**.
2 Write your ID# from your red form on this sheet.
3 Using a #2 pencil, color the circle that corresponds to your answer.
(*Do not mark outside the circle*)
4 Mark only one answer per question.

Demographics

1 When were you born?

1	Before 1941	3%
2	1942 to 1952	13%
3	1953 to 1962	22%
4	1963 to 1977	39%
5	1978 to 1989	22%
6	After 1990	1%

2 What is your gender?

1	Female	48%
2	Male	52%

3 Household Income

1	Under $10,000	2%
2	$10,000 - $24,999	5%
3	$25,000 - $34,999	8%
4	$35,000 - $49,999	18%
5	$50,000 - $74,999	22%
6	$75,000 - $99,999	19%
7	$100,000 - $149,999	18%
8	$150,000 - $200,000	6%
9	Above $200,000	3%

4 Education (Highest Level Completed)

1	Elementary/Junior High School	1%
2	High School	5%
3	Associates/Technical Degree	4%
4	Some College	16%
5	College, Bachelors Degree	44%
6	Masters Degree	26%
7	PhD	5%

5 How many people live in your household?

1	1	26%
2	2	45%
3	3	14%
4	4	12%
5	5 or more	4%

6 What is your Ethnicity?

1	Hispanic or Latino	15%
2	White	75%
3	Black or African American	3%
4	Asian	2%
5	American Indian	0%
6	Other	5%

7 Do you live in or immediately adjacent (within 1 mile) to the East Riverside Corridor Study Area?

1	Yes	54%
2	No	46%

8 Do you work in or immediately adjacent (within 1 mile) to the East Riverside Corridor Study Area?

1	Yes	38%
2	No	62%

9 How long have you lived and/or worked in or adjacent to the Study Area?

1	Do not live/work in the Study Area	18%
2	Less than one year	7%
3	1 to 2 years	15%
4	3 to 8 years	21%
5	9 to 20 years	15%
6	20 to 30 years	14%
7	More than 30 years	10%

10 How long do you intend to live and/or work in or adjacent to the Study Area?

1	Do not live/work in the Study Area	19%
2	Less than one year	1%
3	1 to 2 years	4%
4	3 to 8 years	19%
5	9 to 20 years	22%
6	20 to 30 years	5%
7	For the rest of my life	30%

11 If you do live in the study area, why do you choose to live there?

1	Diversity	15%
2	Affordability	24%
3	Close to airport	0%
4	Close to downtown	27%
5	Close to Ladybird Lake	4%
6	Close to family	0%
7	Close to work	9%
8	Availability of services	4%
9	Availability of transit	0%
10	Other	18%

12 How many cars do you have in your household?

1	None	6%
2	1	36%
3	2	45%
4	3	10%
5	4	3%
6	More than 4	0%

13 What best describes your interest in the future of the East Riverside Corridor Study Area? (Choose one)

1	Business owner in the Study Area – but do not own the property	1%
2	Property and business owner in the Study Area	7%
3	Property owner in the Study Area (not including businesses or home owner)	3%
4	Home owner in the area	38%
5	Renter in the area	8%
6	Student living and/or attending school in the Study Area	1%
7	Interested Citizen working in the Study Area	12%
8	Interested Citizen not living or working in the Study Area	20%
9	Governmental Staff or Elected official	5%
10	Other	4%

Existing Conditions

14 In the past 10 years, the East Riverside Corridor Study Area:

1	Became more of a place that I want to live and work	10%
2	Became more of a place that I want to live	10%
3	Became more of a place that I want to work	2%
4	Became less of a place that I want to live and work	28%
5	Became less of a place that I want to live	10%
6	Became less of a place that I want to work	3%
7	Remained the same	19%
8	Can't judge	17%

15 How often do you shop or do business in the Study Area?

1	Every day	14%
2	A lot (4 times or more a week)	15%
3	Often (1 to 3 times a week)	22%
4	Sometimes (1 to 4 times a month)	22%
5	Rarely (1 to 2 times in six months)	17%
6	Never	9%

16 How many trips along East Riverside Drive do you make every day?

1	None	29%
2	1	16%
3	2	29%
4	3	7%
5	4	9%
6	5	2%
7	More than 5	8%

17 How do you agree with the following statement? "Many, if not most, of my shopping needs are met in the Study Area."

1	Strongly Agree	3%
2	Agree	12%
3	Neutral	18%
4	Disagree	34%
5	Strong Disagree	33%

18 What is your general impression with regard to most of the buildings in the Study Area?

1	Generally in excellent condition	1%
2	Generally in good condition and need some minor improvements	7%
3	Generally in fair to poor condition and need rehabilitation	15%
4	There are pockets of buildings in good condition and others where buildings are out of date and/or in need of redevelopment	45%
5	Most buildings are in poor condition and need serious redevelopment	31%

19 How affordable do you find the housing stock in and around the Study Area?

1	Affordable rental and owner occupied housing	56%
2	Affordable rental housing only	13%
3	Affordable owner occupied housing only	6%
4	Affordable but needs more;	17%
5	Unaffordable rental and owner occupied housing	6%
6	Unaffordable rental housing only	1%

20 When would you say the following statement is true: "East Riverside Drive has a major traffic and congestion problem today."

1	All of the time	21%
2	At peak hours	64%
3	Seldom	13%
4	Never	1%

21 Do you find that it is safe and pleasant to walk on the sidewalks along East Riverside Drive?

1	Yes	2%
2	Sometimes	20%
3	No	78%

22 Do you feel comfortable walking along existing sidewalks throughout the Study Area not along Riverside Drive?

1	Yes	11%
2	Sometimes	40%
3	No	48%

23 Do you find bicycle lanes and paths are connected and continuous and provide a safe method of bicycle travel throughout the Study Area?

1	Yes	2%
2	Sometimes	15%
3	No	83%

24 Is the current operation of public transportation in the Study Area (as an alternative form of transportation to the private automobile) effective enough to meet your needs?

1	Yes	11%
2	Sometimes	31%
3	No	57%

Land Use

25 How do you agree with the following statement: "The East Riverside Corridor, or selected sections of it, should become a destination, or *Main Street*, within the City of Austin in and of itself?"

1	Strongly Agree	40%
2	Agree	39%
3	Neutral	12%
4	Disagree	6%
5	Strongly Disagree	3%

26 **Do you agree with the following statement? "Underutilized surface parking lots can provide space for infill and redevelopment of tomorrow."**

1	Strongly Agree	54%
2	Agree	24%
3	Neutral	11%
4	Disagree	9%
5	Strongly Disagree	1%

27 **Would you support a range of housing types in order to offer different lifestyles throughout the Study Area? (ex. Condos, Apartments, Duplexes, Townhouses, Single Family Structures)**

1	Highly Support	48%
2	Support	38%
3	Neutral	8%
4	Do Not Support	6%

For questions 28 to 43, please note what types of commercial amenities are appropriate for the East Riverside Corridor Study Area.

28 **Local Retail**

1	Extremely Appropriate	58%
2	Appropriate	24%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	15%
4	Not Appropriate	2%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	1%
6	I don't know	1%

29 **Restaurant/Café/Coffee Shop(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	67%
2	Appropriate	22%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	7%
4	Not Appropriate	3%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	0%
6	I don't know	1%

30 **Grocery Store(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	75%
2	Appropriate	15%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	7%
4	Not Appropriate	2%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	0%
6	I don't know	0%

31 **Convenience/Drug Store(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	51%
2	Appropriate	25%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	18%
4	Not Appropriate	4%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	1%
6	I don't know	1%

32 **Pub/Bar(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	24%
2	Appropriate	29%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	27%
4	Not Appropriate	10%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	7%
6	I don't know	2%

33 **Hardware Store(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	35%
2	Appropriate	32%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	18%
4	Not Appropriate	11%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	2%
6	I don't know	2%

34 **Religious Facilities**

1	Extremely Appropriate	28%
2	Appropriate	32%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	28%
4	Not Appropriate	7%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	1%
6	I don't know	3%

35 **Cinema(s)/Live Theater(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	42%
2	Appropriate	37%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	13%
4	Not Appropriate	6%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	1%
6	I don't know	0%

36 **Clothing Store(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	35%
2	Appropriate	40%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	13%
4	Not Appropriate	5%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	3%
6	I don't know	3%

37 **K-12 School(s)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	42%
2	Appropriate	33%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	15%
4	Not Appropriate	7%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	2%
6	I don't know	2%

38 **Health Facilities**

1	Extremely Appropriate	52%
2	Appropriate	38%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	5%
4	Not Appropriate	5%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	2%
6	I don't know	0%

39 **Daycare Facility(ies)**

1	Extremely Appropriate	41%
2	Appropriate	31%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	15%
4	Not Appropriate	8%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	2%
6	I don't know	2%

40 Senior Care/Assisted Living Facility(ies)

1	Extremely Appropriate	24%
2	Appropriate	36%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	21%
4	Not Appropriate	8%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	4%
6	I don't know	7%

41 Public Meeting Facility(ies)

1	Extremely Appropriate	36%
2	Appropriate	41%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	14%
4	Not Appropriate	7%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	1%
6	I don't know	1%

42 Gas Station(s)/Car Repair Shop(s)

1	Extremely Appropriate	18%
2	Appropriate	24%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	35%
4	Not Appropriate	18%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	4%
6	I don't know	1%

43 Indoor Recreation Facility(ies) (Basketball, Tennis, Racquetball Courts; etc.)

1	Extremely Appropriate	24%
2	Appropriate	39%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	23%
4	Not Appropriate	7%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	3%
6	I don't know	4%

44 I would most likely walk/bike to _____ if they were within a 15 minute walk from my home.

1	nothing	4%
2	the grocery store	3%
3	the post office/bank/pharmacy	3%
4	restaurant/ coffee shop	5%
5	mixed-use retail shopping	4%
6	school	0%
7	parks and trails	12%
8	work	2%
9	a combination of the above (please write in) _____.	18%
10	all of the above	50%

45 If a light rail or streetcar system were implemented, what would be your FIRST choice for an amenity at a new Light Rail/streetcar station?

1	Café/restaurant	47%
2	Bookstore	5%
3	Pharmacy	2%
4	Bank	2%
5	Dry Cleaner	1%
6	Nothing	10%
7	a combination of the above (please write in) _____.	29%
8	Other _____	4%

46 How would you support freezing property taxes at the current level for home owners and business owners earning an income that is considered low (less than $51,000 for a family of three) to very low (less than $32,000 for a family of 3)?

1	Highly Support	42%
2	Support	26%
3	Neutral	13%
4	Do Not Support	18%

Concentrated Development

47 There is a potential for light rail or streetcar line with stops to be placed along the East Riverside Corridor. How do you support the idea that higher concentrated infill/redevelopment should occur in a series of "development nodes" around transit stops (Transit Oriented Developments) focusing new retail, office and residential uses?

1	Highly Support	52%
2	Support	25%
3	Neutral	14%
4	Do Not Support	10%

48 What is the maximum number of stories you would allow in the development nodes around transit stops?

1	1 to 2 stories	8%
2	2 to 3 stories	16%
3	3 to 4 stories	27%
4	4 to 5 stories	21%
5	6 to 8 stories	13%
6	8 to 12 stories	6%
7	12+ stories	10%

It is common for cities to award height bonuses on top of maximum allowable heights in specified areas if a developer provides additional amenities in exchange for those bonuses. For questions 49 to 60, please identify the community benefits you would support in exchange for height bonuses in such selected areas within the Study Area.

49 Providing Affordable Housing Units (up to 20% of all market rate units built)

1	Extremely Appropriate	31%
2	Appropriate	25%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	25%
4	Not Appropriate	8%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	5%

50 Contribution to or incorporation of public/community facilities

1	Extremely Appropriate	35%
2	Appropriate	34%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	18%
4	Not Appropriate	5%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	2%

51 Reducing Parking Requirements (below current standards)

1	Extremely Appropriate	22%
2	Appropriate	22%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	13%
4	Not Appropriate	15%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	16%
6	I don't know	12%

52 Open Space, including parks and plazas (above the basic requirement)

1	Extremely Appropriate	62%
2	Appropriate	25%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	7%
4	Not Appropriate	2%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	2%
6	I don't know	2%

53 Financial contribution to new transit lines and/or stations

1	Extremely Appropriate	38%
2	Appropriate	25%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	16%
4	Not Appropriate	7%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	10%
6	I don't know	4%

54 Landscaping and Streetscaping within the Study Area (above base requirement)

1	Extremely Appropriate	56%
2	Appropriate	24%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	8%
4	Not Appropriate	5%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	2%

55 Bicycle Facilities (bike racks, cyclist changing/showering rooms)

1	Extremely Appropriate	54%
2	Appropriate	23%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	9%
4	Not Appropriate	8%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	2%

56 Green Building Program and/or LEED™ Certification (Energy Efficient Green Buildings)

1	Extremely Appropriate	47%
2	Appropriate	29%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	12%
4	Not Appropriate	5%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	2%

57 Green Roofs/Xeriscaping (landscaping without the need of supplemental irrigation)

1	Extremely Appropriate	48%
2	Appropriate	22%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	16%
4	Not Appropriate	8%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	4%
6	I don't know	2%

58 Solar Panel Arrays to generate solar electricity

1	Extremely Appropriate	47%
2	Appropriate	27%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	15%
4	Not Appropriate	5%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	2%

59 Wind Turbines to generate wind electricity

1	Extremely Appropriate	37%
2	Appropriate	27%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	13%
4	Not Appropriate	15%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	3%

60 Creating a Landmark Building (buildings of notable architectural significance)

1	Extremely Appropriate	40%
2	Appropriate	21%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	15%
4	Not Appropriate	13%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	5%
6	I don't know	5%

Transit/Transportation

61 Do you think the Study Area should be walkable/bikeable?

1	Yes	92%
2	Walkable yes, bikeable no	6%
3	Walkable no, bikeable yes	1%
4	No	1%

62 How important to you is walking as a transportation alternative in the future throughout the Study Area?

1	Very Important	73%
2	Important	20%
3	Not really Important	5%
4	Don't Care	2%

63 How important to you is bicycling as a transportation alternative in the future throughout the Study Area?

1	Very Important	64%
2	Important	22%
3	Not really Important	9%
4	Don't Care	5%

64 A light rail or streetcar system has been suggested that would serve the East Riverside Corridor Study Area with the line and multiple stops located along East Riverside Drive from the airport (ABIA) to downtown. How much would you support this idea?

1	Highly support	70%
2	Support	19%
3	Neutral	5%
4	Do not support	6%

65 If such a light rail or streetcar system was implemented, how often would you or your family use it in the future?

1	Very often (3-5 times a week)	35%
2	Often (1-2 times a week)	26%
3	Sometimes (once every two weeks)	26%
4	Rarely (once a month or less)	7%
5	Never	6%

66 Would you support signalized crosswalks (signals specifically designed for pedestrians) at intersections?

1	Yes, at all intersections	58%
2	Yes, but only at key intersections	38%
3	No	2%
4	I don't know	2%

67 **How should East Riverside Drive function in the future?**

1	As an arterial to move as much automotive and transit traffic quickly and safely through the Study Area.	11%
2	To become the Main Street for the area with slow moving traffic along the ***entire length*** and force through traffic onto other arterials which lead to downtown Austin (Oltorff, MLK Blvd., etc.).	31%
3	To become a Main Street in ***selective locations*** with a transit stop, with traffic moving slowly in these locations.	53%
4	Remain the way it is.	4%

68 **Do you support the idea of traffic calming measures to slow traffic in the Study Area, such as raised crosswalks at intersections, speed tables, intersection bulb-outs?**

1	Yes	42%
2	Only in certain locations	47%
3	No	11%

69 **As an alternative to my car, I would be most willing to (use) _____ on a regular basis to supplement my driving.**

1	Walk	18%
2	Bike	13%
3	Buses	15%
4	Street Car and/or Light Rail System	54%

70 **If traffic congestion exists, what is the most appropriate way to try to mitigate the congestion in the Study Area?**

1	I do not believe there is a traffic congestion problem in the area	8%
2	Add additional streets	2%
3	Widen existing streets	6%
4	Propose a new transportation model altogether (adding pedestrian streets, adding a transit system, landscape, bike lanes and/or paths, wide sidewalks, etc.)	84%

Landscape, Streetscape, Open Space & Sustainability

71 **Do you agree that the East Riverside Corridor Study Area needs new landscaping along the streets (grasses, shrubs, trees)?**

1	Strongly Agree	81%
2	Agree	14%
3	Neutral	4%
4	Disagree	1%
5	Strongly Disagree	1%

72 **In order to distinguish different areas along the East Riverside Corridor, do you think it would be appropriate to implement various landscape standards depending on location and land-use? (ex. Natural landscaping treatments vs. formal street trees and paving treatments)**

1	Yes	70%
2	Only in certain locations	25%
3	No	5%

73 **Should signage and lighting become more recognizable and adhere to a specific set of standards designed to help create an identity for development nodes created in the Study Area?**

1	Yes	71%
2	Only in certain locations	22%
3	No	8%

74 **How appropriate is the following statement: "Where 'development nodes' are proposed, fixed awnings, arcades, and/or arbors that protect the pedestrian from sun and rain (see images below) should be included."**

1	Extremely Appropriate	57%
2	Appropriate	29%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	10%
4	Not Appropriate	3%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	2%
6	I don't know	0%


Fixed Awning


Arbor


Arcade

75 **How appropriate would adding Active Recreation to the Study Area be (basketball and tennis courts, baseball fields, etc.)?**

1	Extremely Appropriate	25%
2	Appropriate	33%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	31%
4	Not Appropriate	7%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	2%
6	I don't know	2%

76 **How appropriate would adding Passive Recreation to the Study Area be (trails, open space, preserved areas)?**

1	Extremely Appropriate	69%
2	Appropriate	20%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	5%
4	Not Appropriate	3%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	1%
6	I don't know	2%

77 **How appropriate is the following statement: "All streets should be tree-lined."**

1	Extremely Appropriate	53%
2	Appropriate	27%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	17%
4	Not Appropriate	2%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	0%
6	I don't know	2%

78 **How appropriate is incorporating "green", sustainable design into the East Riverside Corridor Study Area?**

1	Extremely Appropriate	75%
2	Appropriate	19%
3	Somewhat Appropriate	5%
4	Not Appropriate	0%
5	Extremely Inappropriate	1%
6	I don't know	0%

79 **What sustainable energy option do you see as most appropriate to power the Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods?**

1	Solar Power	63%
2	Wind Power	6%
3	Geothermal Power	2%
4	Biofuels/Biomass	1%
5	Use less energy: become more energy conscious	27%

80 **What is the most important aspect of sustainability for the future of the East Riverside Corridor Study Area?**

1	Renewable energy (solar, wind, hydro, geothermal, biofuels)	
2	Land Use Distribution (Mixed Use, Compact Development)	25%
3	Transportation (Mass transit options, walkability, bikability)	41%
4	Water Management (Xeriscaping, Rainwater collection, Water quality control)	10%
5	Green Building Practices (Green Building Program, LEED Certification)	8%

Marketing Information

81 **Who best represents the largest group you envision moving into the East Riverside Corridor Study Area (in the next 20 years)?**

1	Families	31%
2	Young Professionals	58%
3	College Students	9%
4	Retirees	2%

82 **Approximately what percentages of renters versus owners do you envision for the Study Area (in the next 20 years)?**

1	100% Own	3%
2	25% Rent, 75% Own	32%
3	50% Rent, 50% Own	57%
4	75% Rent, 25% Own	7%
5	100% Rent	0%

83 **What income groups do you envision living in the Study Area (based on today's dollar value)?**

1	Very Low Income Only (Income less than $32,00 for a family of 3)	2%
2	Low Income Only (Income less than $51,000 for a family of 3)	2%
3	Moderate Income Only (Income less than $75,000 for a family of 3)	21%
4	High Income Only (100% plus MFI: $70,001 or more)	4%
5	A mix of Low and Very Low Incomes	1%
6	A mix of Moderate and High Income	20%
7	A mix of all income levels	51%

84 **What do you think average new residential units in the East Riverside Corridor Study Area should cost (based on today's dollar value)?**

1	Less than $100,000 average per unit	10%
2	Average $100,000 to $175,000 per unit	35%
3	Average $175,000 to $250,000 per unit	27%
4	Average $250,000 to $500,000 per unit	6%
5	More than $500,000 average per unit	0%
6	All of the Above	15%
7	I don't know	6%

85 **What kind of commercial/retail do you envision for the Study Area?**

1	Maintain existing local businesses	7%
2	Add to local business base	61%
3	Attract regionally owned enterprises	23%
4	Atrract nationally recognized chains	9%

86 **What is your <u>FIRST PRIORITY</u> with regards to reinvestment/enhancements throughout the Study Area?**

1	New/Improved Sidewalks	11%
2	New/Improved Bike Lanes and Paths	15%
3	New Transit Line and Stops	31%
4	New/Improved Bus Lines and Stops	5%
5	Intersection Improvements	10%
6	New/Improved Landscaping	23%
7	New/Improved Lighting	5%

Safety and Security

87 **What do you feel is the most prevalent kind of crime in the Study Area and surrounding areas?**

1	Mugging	3%
2	Car theft	6%
3	Drug dealing/Drug use	36%
4	Burglary	32%
5	Prostitution	0%
6	I do not think there is any perceived crime in the area	2%
7	I don't know	21%

88 **What do you think <u>others</u> feel is perceived as the most prevalent kind of crime located within Study Area and the surrounding areas?**

1	Mugging	10%
2	Car theft	3%
3	Drug dealing/Drug use	43%
4	Burglary	25%
5	Prostitution	3%
6	I do not think there is any perceived crime in the area	2%
7	I don't know	15%

89 **How serious do you think the safety issues are for the growth of the East Riverside Corridor Study Area?**

1	I do not think there are any safety issues within the Study Area	2%
2	It is not very serious	7%
3	It is somewhat serious, but will only hinder growth a little	31%
4	If things do not change, I do not think the area will grow	54%
5	I don't know	6%
		0%

90 **What is the number one thing that should be done about perceived crime and safety issues for the Study Area?**

1	Increased physical police presence	27%
2	Police video surveillance	5%
3	Neighborhood Watch Associations	8%
4	Redevelop blighted properties	49%
5	Gated Communities	1%
6	General maintenance of streets and building stock	10%

Vision Translation Workshop Results

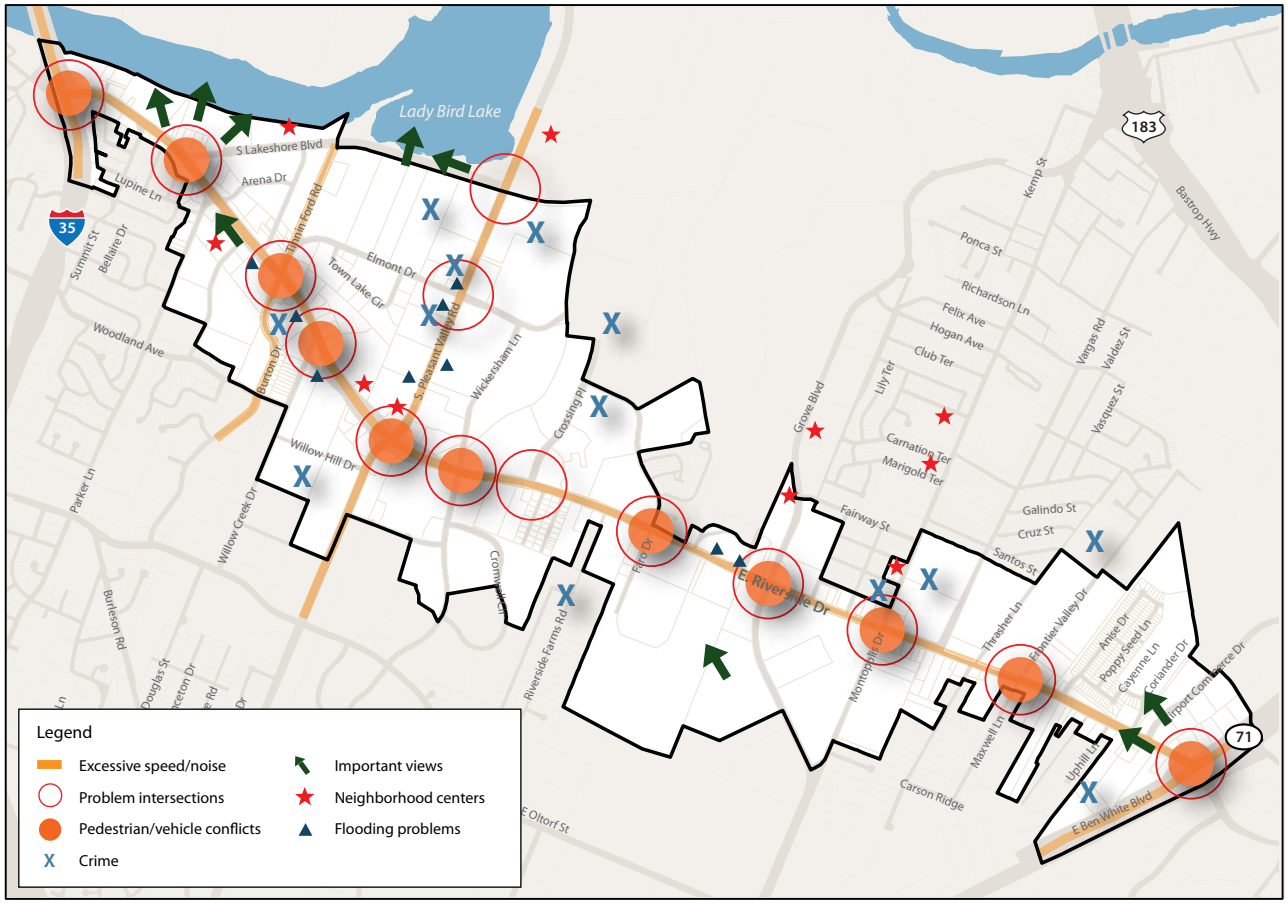
In addition to the VPS™ and Questionnaire, the Beta Test and Visioning meetings included a Vision Translation Workshop. Whereas the VPS™ indicates what the community is looking for, the Vision Translation Workshop indicates where people want the elements illustrated in positive images to be located and where, based on the negative images, redevelopment should be focused. People working in groups participated in the Vision Translation portion of the Community Workshops by completing drawings of their perceptions and desires on large base maps of the Area.

Four maps were generated through the drawing exercises at the public meeting: Existing Conditions, Susceptibility to Change, Mobility, and Land Uses and Design Elements. In these exercises, participants were asked to physically identify areas in need of improvement as well as the desired placement of a range of urban design elements and mobility options. Workshop maps and results are described on the following pages.

Existing Conditions Map

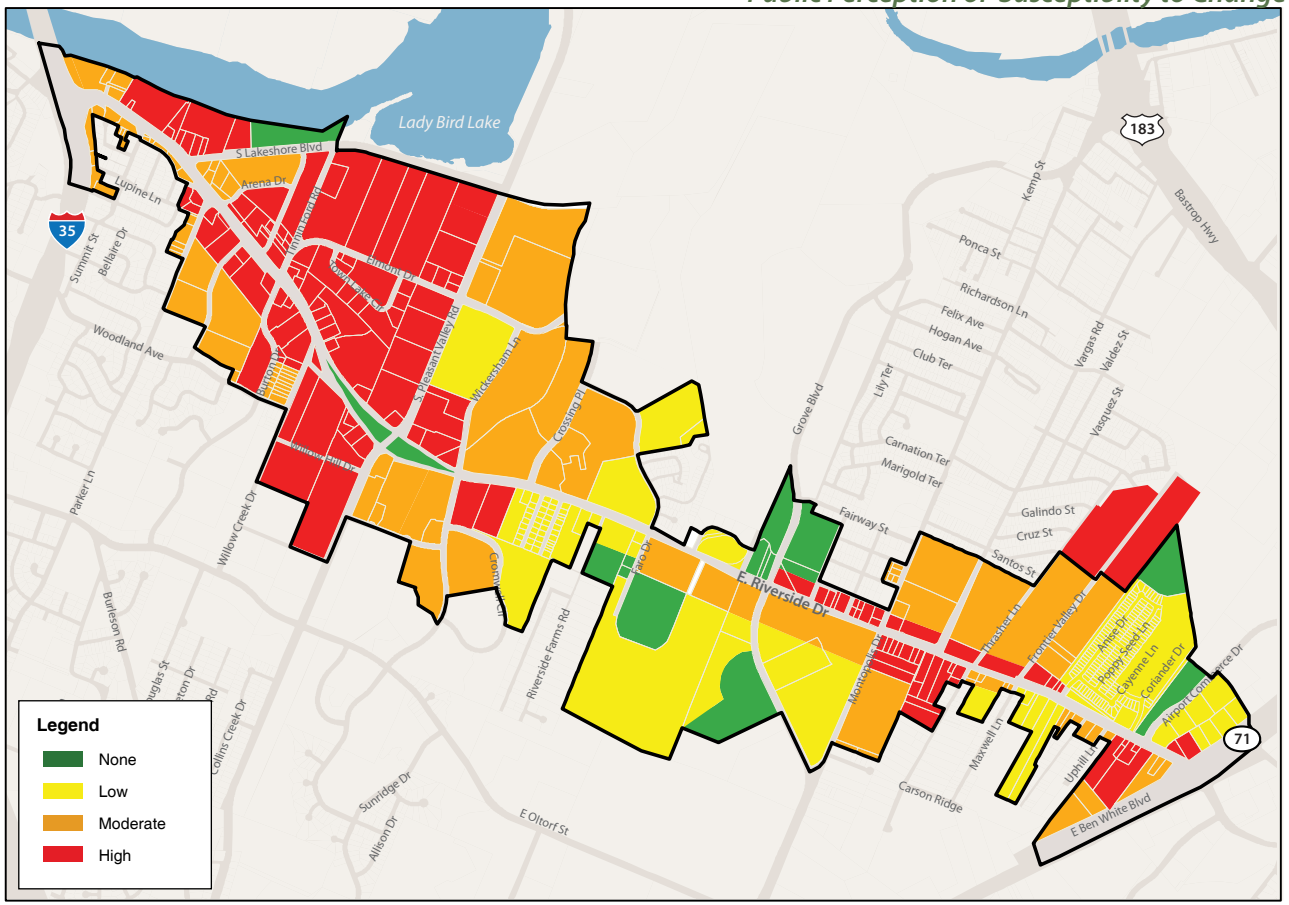
During the workshops, participants were asked to describe existing conditions throughout the Study Area. They identified all of East Riverside Drive as having excessive traffic speed and noise, as well as along Tinnin Ford Road, South Pleasant Valley Road, Burton Drive, and E. Ben White Boulevard. Eleven (11) areas were shown to have conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, which is indicated by orange circles on the existing conditions map. Fourteen (14) locations throughout the Study Area were identified as problem intersections. Flooding problems, shown as blue triangles, were indicated along portions of the East Riverside Corridor and South Pleasant Valley Road. Blue X's mark locations where there is a perceived or actual crime problem.

Exhibit B.1:
Visual Translation Workshop
Public Perception of Existing Conditions



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Exhibit B.2:
Visual Translation Workshop
Public Perception of Susceptibilty to Change



(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

NORTH
Feet
0 1,000

Susceptibility to Change Map

The map shown on the following page represents a synthesis of the input gathered during the Workshops. The susceptibility to change map indicates four broad categories: high, moderate, low, and none.

1. High Susceptibility to Change (Colored Red)

Areas identified as highly susceptible to change, colored red on the map, were noted by participants as having the highest priority for development and redevelopment. These are locations where the majority of participants thought change from the existing conditions was imminent and necessary. The highly susceptible to change areas on this map typically include buildings in deteriorating condition, older single story buildings, under utilized surface parking lots, aging and vacant commercial buildings, or empty lots.

2. Moderate Susceptibility to Change (Colored Orange)

The second highest priority redevelopment areas are identified as moderately susceptible to change. These areas are colored orange and redevelopment would require major changes including removal of some existing buildings, rehabilitation of others and targeted infill.

3. Low Susceptibility to Change (Colored Yellow)

Areas perceived by participants as needing only minor improvements and rehabilitation are indicated in yellow on the maps. Little or no growth is expected in low susceptibility to change areas. While these buildings may not be redeveloped for many years, it is our recommendation that any remodeling or rehabilitation that happens in this area should conform to the streetscape design standards outlined in this plan. The Areas colored yellow are lots or buildings that are expected to go through minor changes but will substantially remain the same for the next couple of decades.

4. No Susceptibility to Change (Colored Green)

The green areas on the maps illustrate where participants feel change should not occur. Included in this category are newer buildings in excellent condition. Buildings within these areas are not expected to change in the foreseeable future (20-30 years).

In terms of the master plan, the susceptibility to change study helped guide the formulation of land use districts, neighborhood hubs, potential redevelopment around transit stops and revision of the study area boundary.

Desired Mobility & Improvements Map

During the workshops, participants addressed six different elements tied to mobility. Locations of potential transit stops were identified by dark blue bulls' eyes with 5-8 minute walking circles in light blue surrounding these transit stops. Areas where participants desired slower moving traffic and therefore improved pedestrian safety were indicated by blue triangles along not only East Riverside Drive, but South Pleasant Valley Road, Grove Boulevard, and Montopolis Drive as well. Major intersections along E. Riverside Drive, as well as a portion of South Pleasant Valley Road, were recognized as areas for pedestrian improvements. Participants indicated their desire for bicycle paths/lanes on every major road in the Study Area. Shading by trees, arcades, or pergolas are desired all along E. Riverside Drive, Parker Lane, S. Lakeshore Boulevard, Tinnin Ford Road, Burton Road, Elmont Drive, South Pleasant Valley Road, Grove Boulevard, and Montopolis Drive.

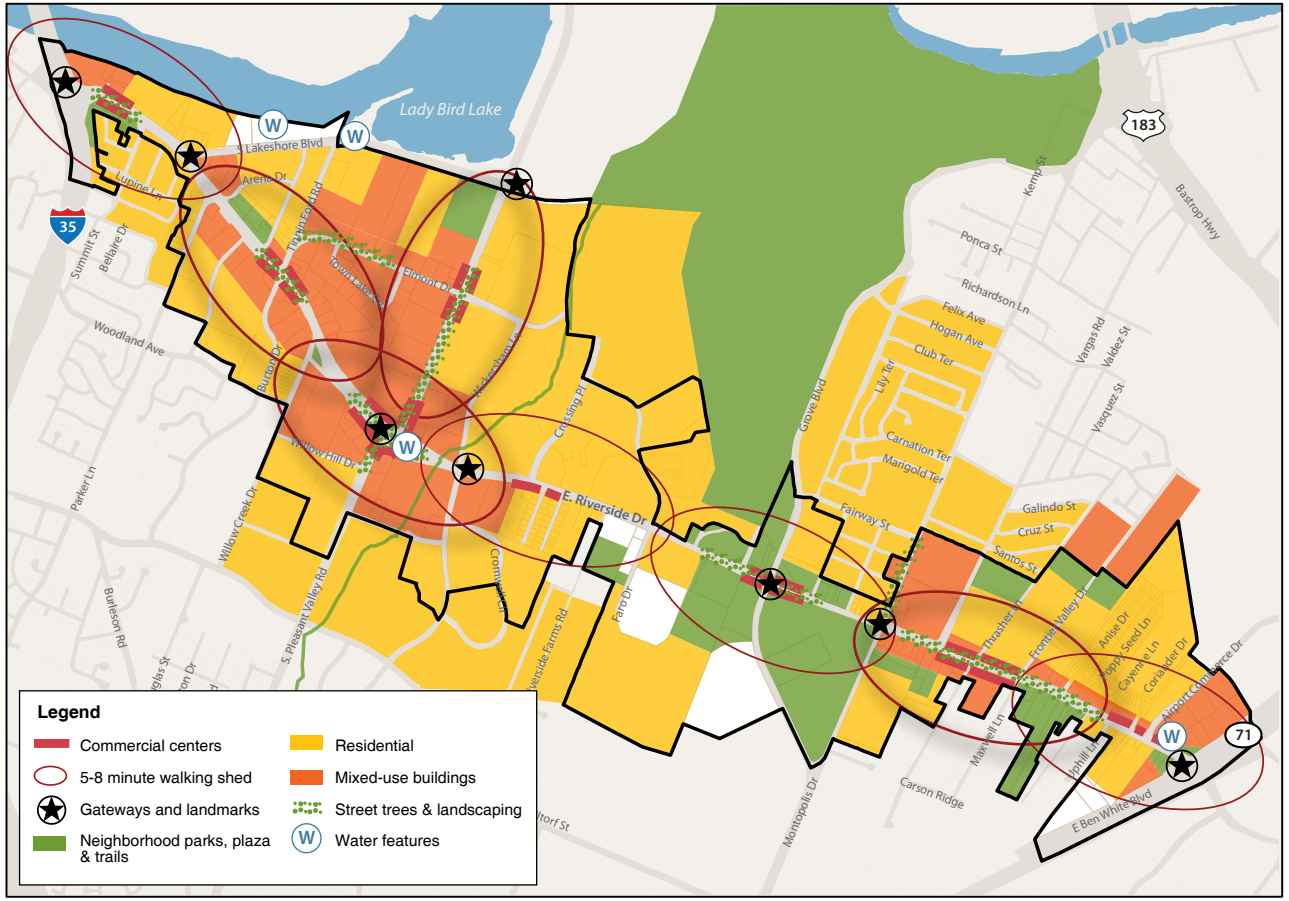
Exhibit B.3:
Visual Translation Workshop
Desired Mobility Improvements

(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Land Use & Design Elements Map

During this portion of the workshops, participants were asked to consider eight elements of land use design. The synthesis shows that commercial centers, depicted as red rectangles, were placed at all major intersections with E. Riverside Corridor, as well as along South Pleasant Valley Road and Elmont Drive. These commercial areas are surrounded by 5-8 minute walking circles which indicate the distance most shoppers will walk along a retail street before driving. Participants were asked to label potential gateway and landmark locations within the Study Area with black stars and circles. These locations indicate where signature architecture, large sculpture, or special streetscaping should be located. Two water features are desired along E. Riverside Drive and two along Lady Bird Lake. Participants were then asked to locate three future land uses within the Study Area; (1) neighborhood parks, plazas, and trails, (2) residential, and (3) mixed use buildings. Locations for new street trees and landscaping are indicated by small green circles and are clustered around the proposed commercial centers.

Exhibit B.4:
Visual Translation Workshop
Desired Land Use and Design Elements

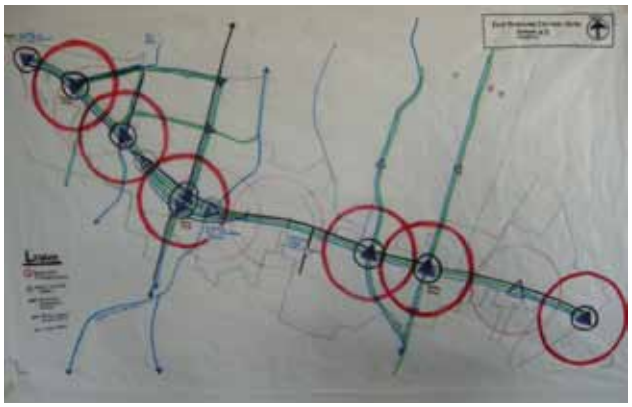


(This exhibit reflects the original study area boundary which was refined in other maps to reflect public input gathered during the planning process.)

Professional Design Charette

Following two days of intensive evaluation of the VPS™ and Questionnaire results and the synthesis of the Vision Translation Workshop, A. Nelessen Associates facilitated the East Riverside Corridor Professional Design Charette for the Consultants and City staff. The goal of the charrette was to develop a foundation for the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan using the expertise of the Consulting Team as well as various planning staff from the City of Austin. The charrette served as a complement to the public outreach efforts undertaken in previous months.

The one day charrette was broken down into morning and afternoon activities. The morning was geared towards reviewing the technical aspects of existing conditions, as well as the results of the Public Visioning process. The afternoon was geared towards applying the morning's information to generate concept designs applicable 1) Corridor wide, as well as 2) designating focus areas in the Corridor to be further explored and defined in the Concept development process. The result of the Design Charrette was a series of maps and ideas centered on the public input process, which formed the basis for design of the concept plans that are presented in this Master Plan.

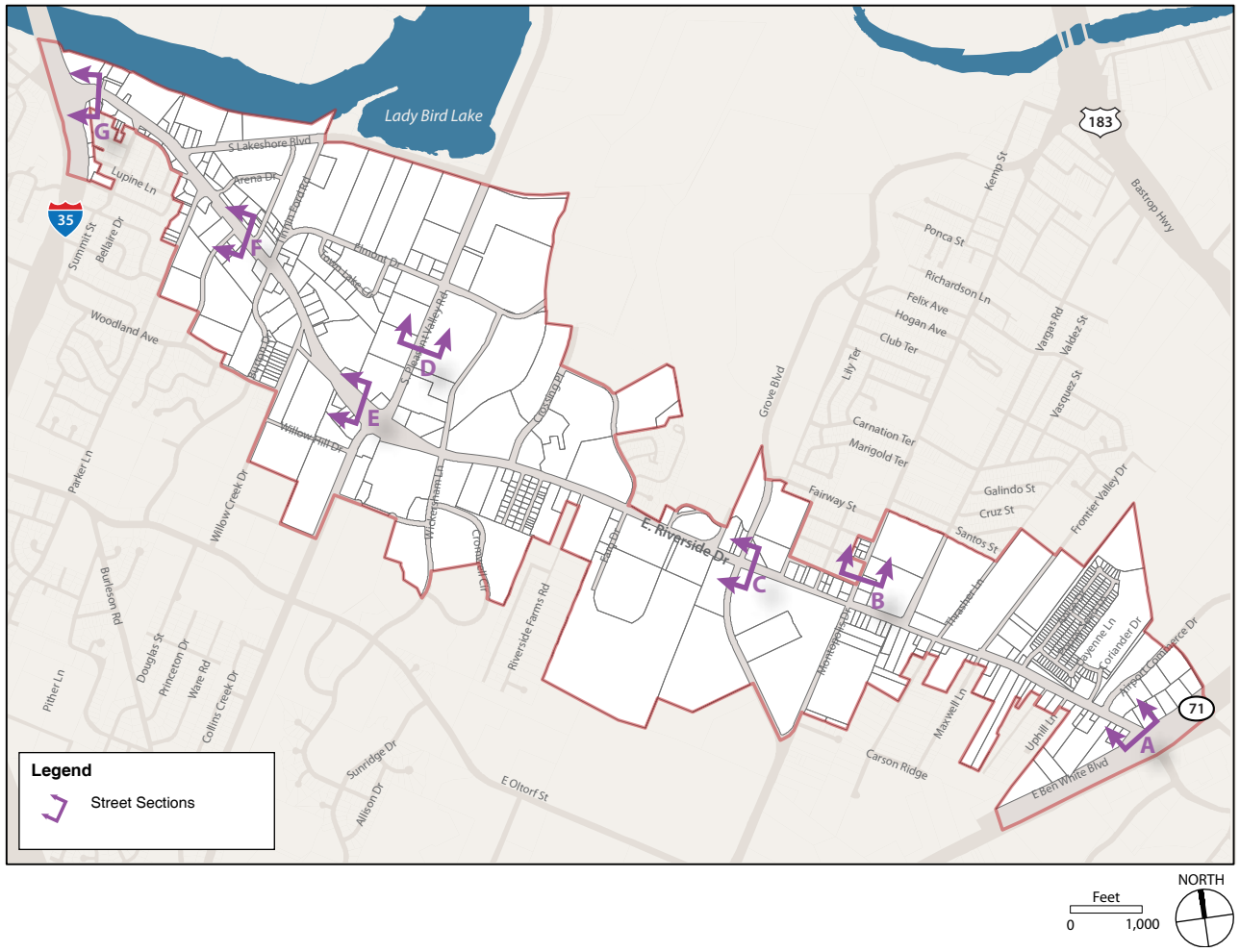


APPENDIX C

STREET CLASSIFICATIONS /SECTIONS

EXISTING STREET SECTIONS
PROPOSED STREETS
TYPICAL ARTERIAL STREET SECTION
TYPICAL COLLECTOR STREET SECTION
TYPICAL LOCAL STREET SECTION

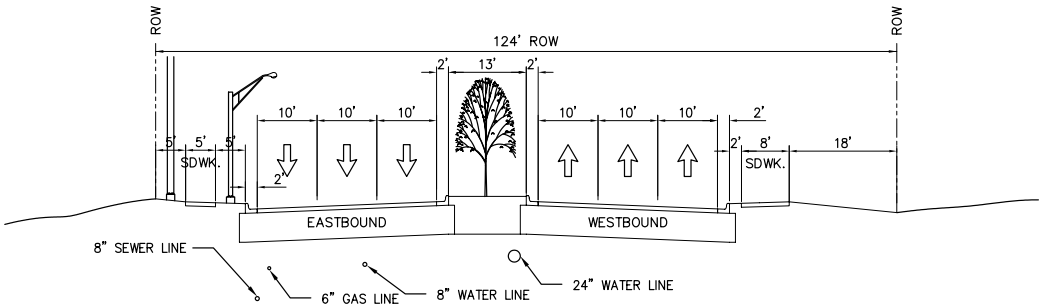
Exhibit C.1:
Existing Street Sections Map



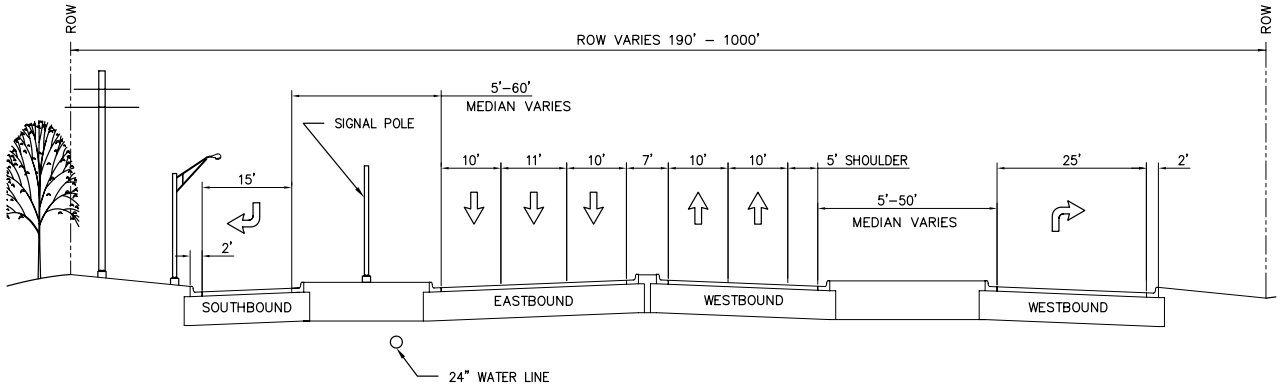
Existing Street Section

Seven street sections were generated based on Existing Conditions within the East Riverside Corridor. Exhibit C.1 Existing Street Section Map identifies where these street sections were taken.

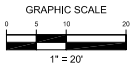
Section A



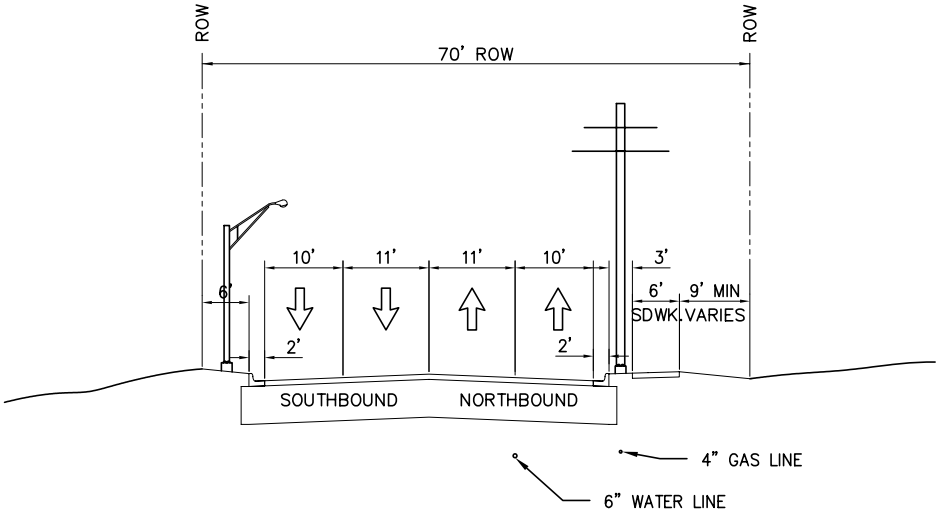
EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE 500 FEET WEST OF THE
INTERSECTION WITH EAST BEN WHITE BLVD. (AREA A)



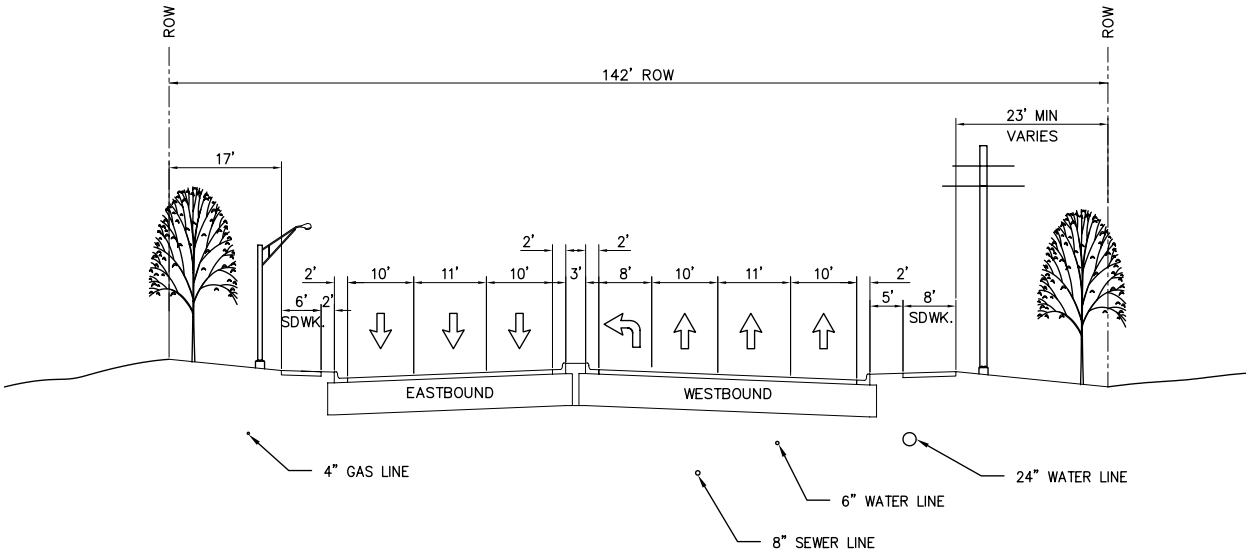
EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE 15 FEET WEST OF THE
INTERSECTION WITH EAST BEN WHITE BLVD. (AREA A)



Sections B & C



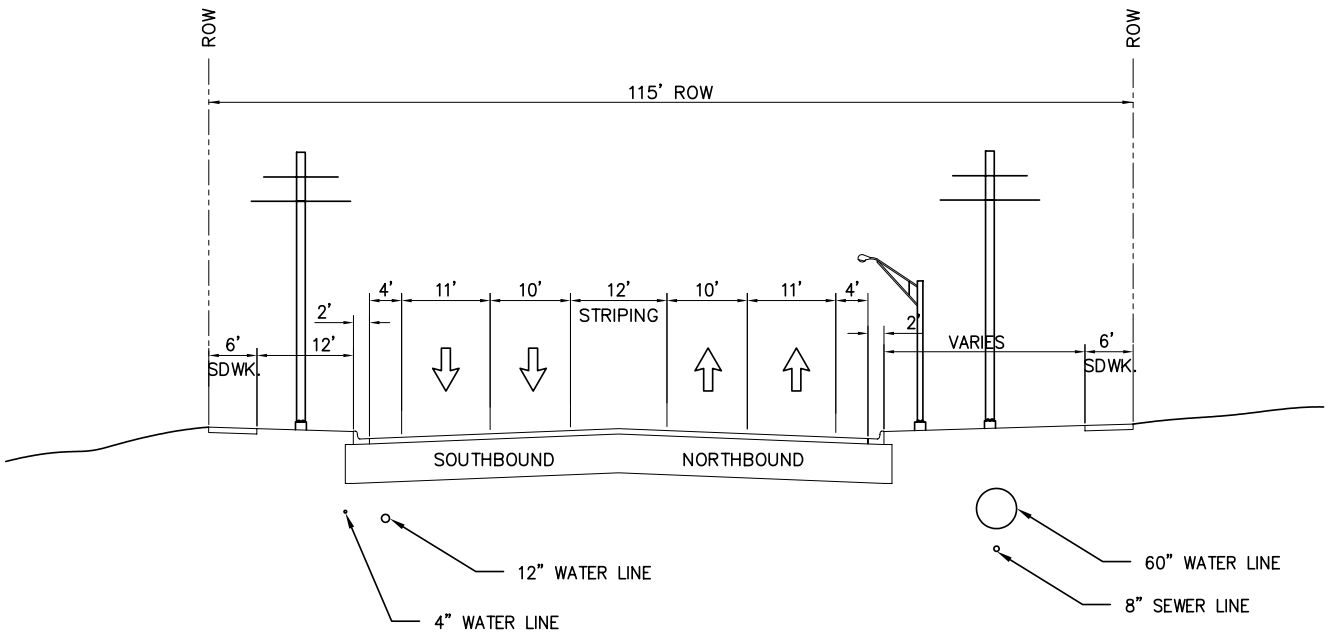
MONTOPOLIS DRIVE 140 FEET NORTH OF THE INTERSECTION WITH EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE (AREA B)



EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE 200 FEET WEST OF THE INTERSECTION WITH GROVE BLVD. (AREA C)

GRAPHIC SCALE
0 5 10 20

Section D



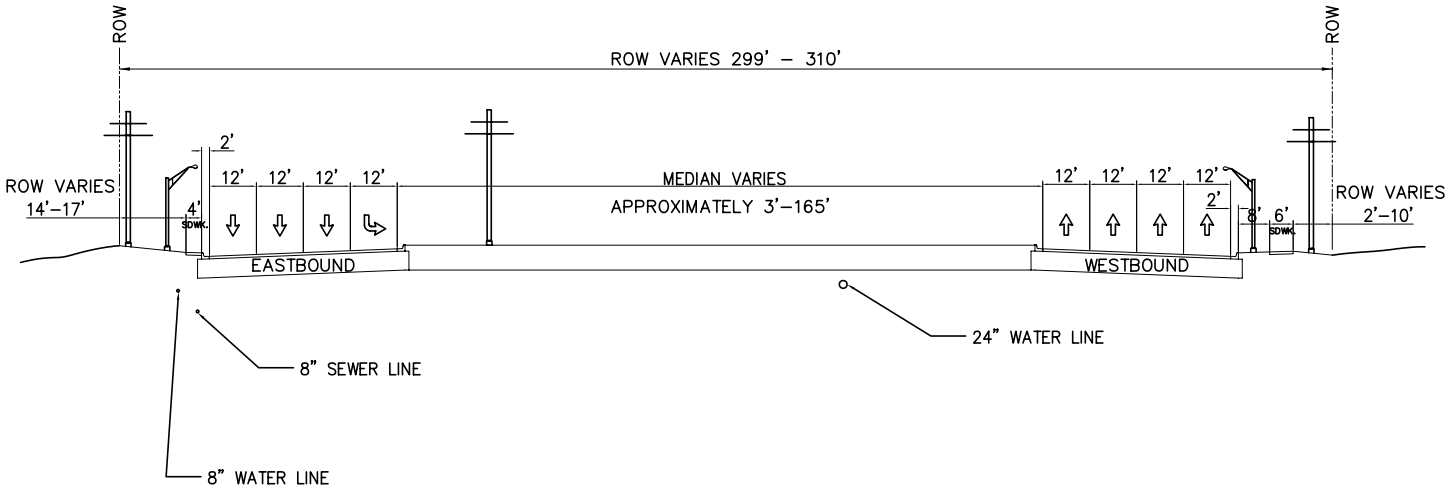
PLEASANT VALLEY ROAD MID BLOCK

1000 FEET NORTH OF THE INTERSECTION WITH RIVERSIDE DRIVE (AREA D)

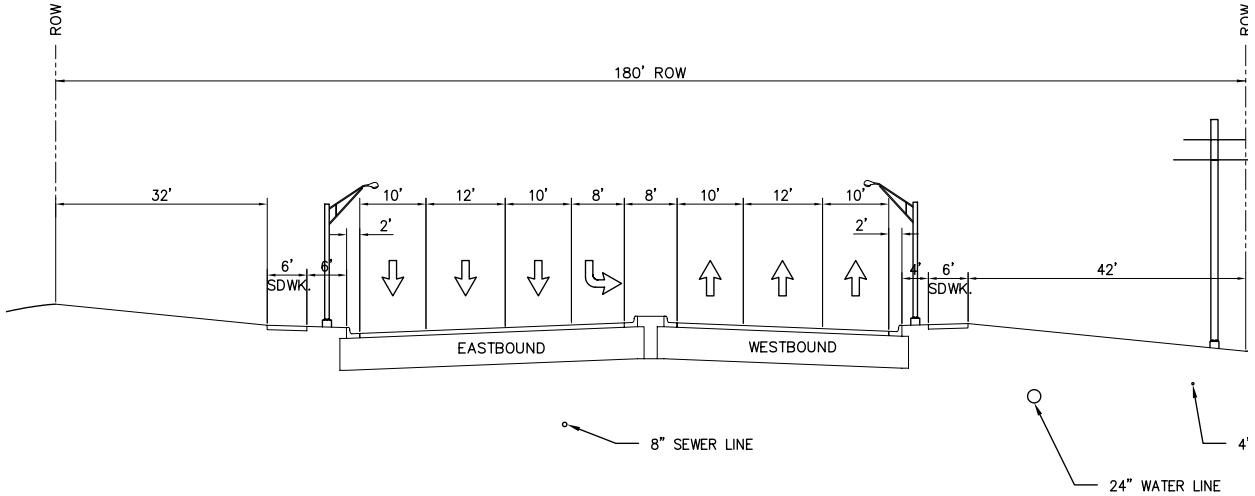
GRAPHIC SCALE

0 5 10 20

Sections E & F



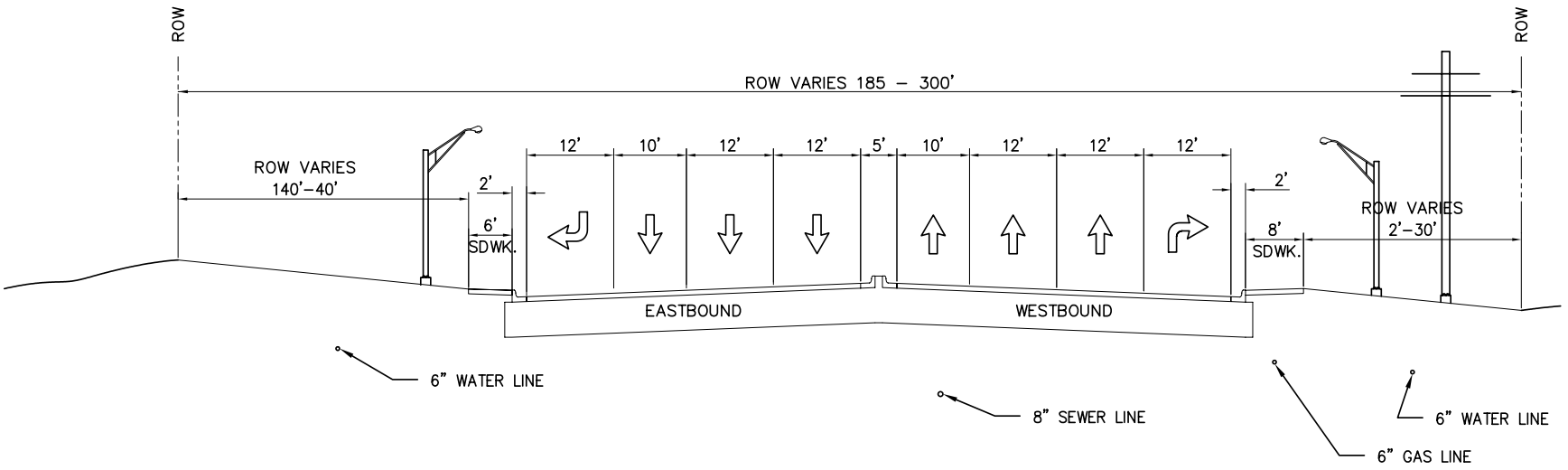
EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE 150 FEET WEST OF THE
INTERSECTION WITH SOUTH PLEASANT VALLEY ROAD (AREA E)



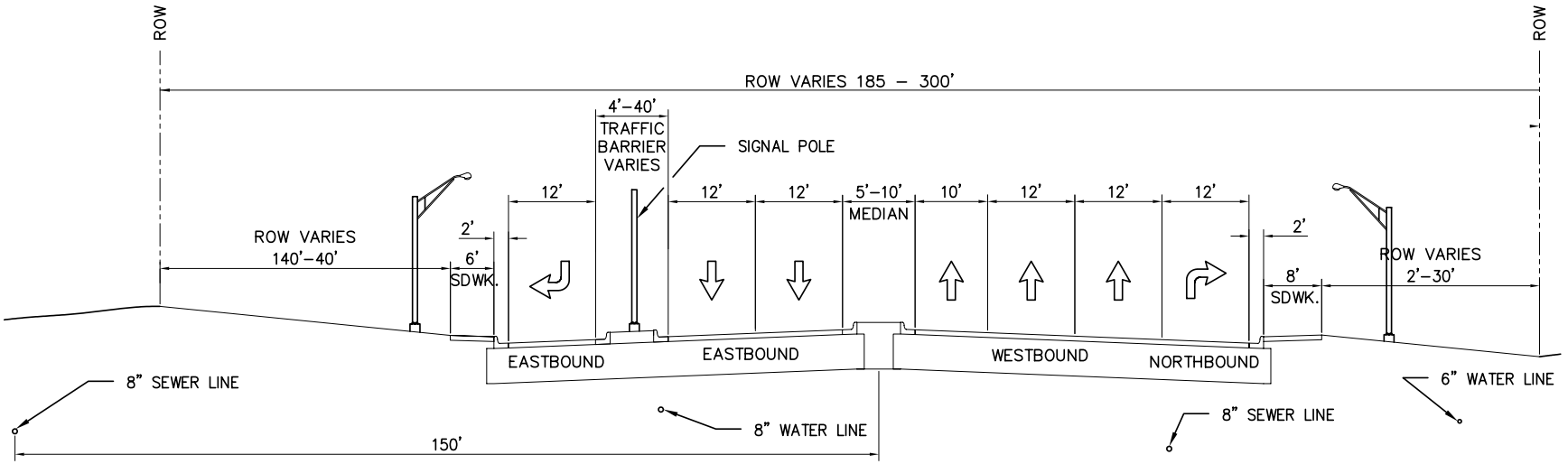
EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE 50 FEET WEST OF THE
INTERSECTION WITH TOWN CREEK DRIVE NEAR ARENA DRIVE (AREA F)

GRAPHIC SCALE
0 5 10 20

Section G



EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE 330 FEET EAST OF THE INTERSECTION I–35 (AREA G)



EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE 15 FEET EAST OF THE INTERSECTION I–35 (AREA G)

GRAPHIC SCALE
0 5 10 20

Proposed Streets

The combination of new and existing streets create a hierarchical interconnected network. The range of street typologies corresponds with the function and form of the street. There are three broad street categories: Arterial, Collector, Local.

It is highly encouraged that each street type within the network be buffered with landscaping and context-sensitive streetlights to enhance pedestrian circulation, as per the recommendations of in the Master Plan. On-street parallel parking is recommended on all streets except where prohibited.

In the following pages the three street categories will be introduced that will address: travel lanes, bicycle lanes, boulevard, and on-street parallel parking. Street sections for each of the street categories may display various Right-of-Way dimensions based on the requirements of each of those components.

On streets that are designated as boulevards, the boulevard should be incorporated into the right of way. Boulevards provide an extra layer of landscaping which transforms busy streets into a more balanced environment between the pedestrian realm and the vehicular realm. They encourage pedestrianism by disguising the width of the street by breaking the travel lanes into two sections. Boulevards should be wide enough to accommodate turn lanes. Recommended boulevards are identified in Exhibit 3.2 Boulevards Map in the Master Plan.

On streets where a bicycle lane is recommended, a separate bicycle lane should be striped as part of the larger bicycle network system. It is imperative that the separate bicycle lanes are designated between the travel lane and parallel parking, if it exists, and runs one way in each direction, in order to keep the bicyclists visible from the vehicular traffic and not hidden behind the row of parked cars. Recommended bicycle lanes are identified in the Mobility Section of the Master Plan.

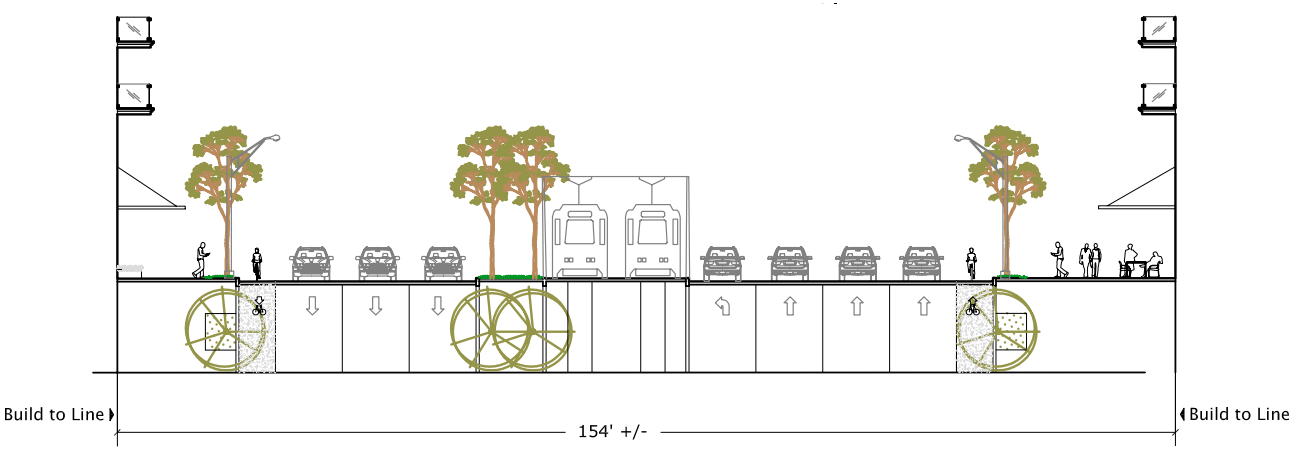
The collection of street sections included in this section is intended to serve as a reference. Readers can refer to these street sections in order to view a visual representation of a particular street type.

Typical Arterial Street Section

East Riverside Drive is an arterial street used to facilitate the traffic between and through the identified hubs. According to the proposal in this Plan, East Riverside Drive will have three lanes of traffic in each direction with a designated bicycle lane that is well marked and clearly identifiable to the pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The boulevard will need to be wide enough to accommodate the transit line as well as turn lanes at major intersections. East Riverside Drive should have a planted strip or street furniture zone along the street edge of the sidewalk in order to separate the pedestrian realm from the vehicular realm. East Riverside Drive will typically have wider sidewalks and the most streetscape amenities lining the street edge including benches, trash receptacles, sidewalk cafes, and store displays.

In the future, the travel lane closest to the street edge could become a row of parallel parking during designated hours determined by the City of Austin in order to slow traffic and provide extra parking within the identified hubs. Under the proposal, the width requiredfor East Riverside Drive varies from 154 feet to 194 feet dependent on sidewalk widths. The Right-of-Way should also be 125 feet at the East Riverside Drive and South Pleasant Valley intersection talked about in the *Mobility Section* of the Master Plan.

EAST RIVERSIDE DRIVE **TYPICAL SECTION 154 : 124**



Typical Collector Street Section

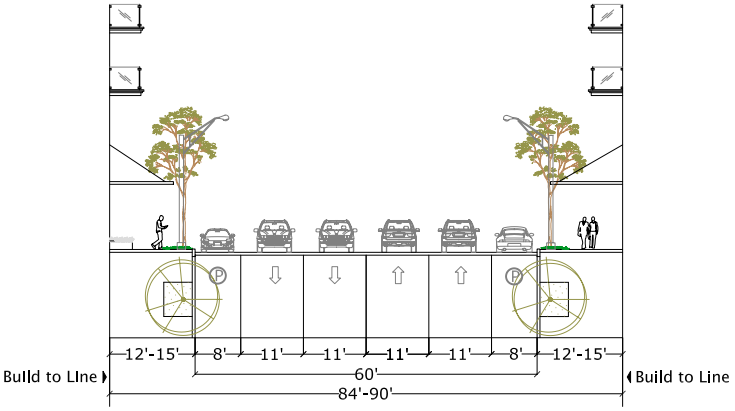
Collector streets are major streets that move vehicular traffic flow to and from the identified hubs established in the Master Plan. The typical collector street has one to two lanes of traffic in each direction with a row of parallel parking on each street edge and widens to accommodate turn lanes. Collector streets are proposed to have streetscape amenities lining the street edge including sidewalks, street trees, benches, trash receptacles, sidewalk cafes, and store displays.

Certain collector streets should include bicycle lanes and/or boulevards. Proposed bicycle lanes are identified by the Bicycle Map in the *Mobility Section*. Proposed boulevards are identified by the Boulevard Map in the *Open Space and Streetscape Section*.

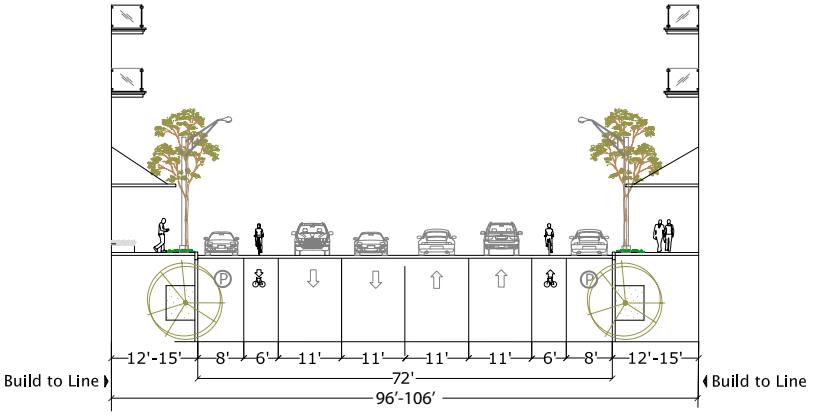
The ideal Right-of-Way of collector streets varies from 84 feet to 120 feet dependent on various components such as bicycle lanes, row of parallel parking, and boulevard. Collector: 84 : 60 has two lanes of traffic in each direction with two rows of parallel parking. Collector 107:83 is a bouevard that incorporates two lanes of traffic in each direction with two bicycle lanes, two rows of parallel parking, and a median.

Some collector streets serving primarily smaller scale residential development may also follow the typical local street sections shown on the following pages.

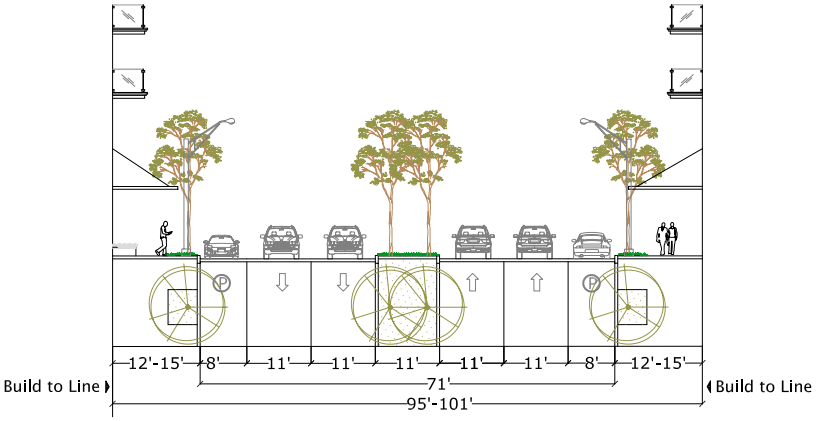
Collector: 84 : 60



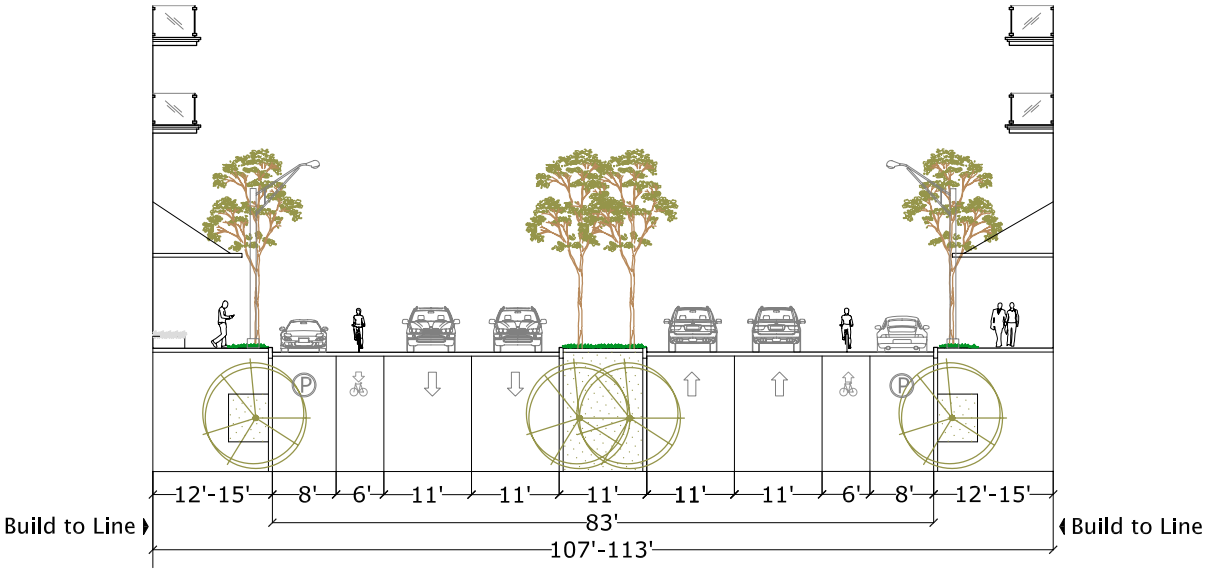
Collector: 96 : 72



Boulevard: 95 : 71



Boulevard: 107 : 83

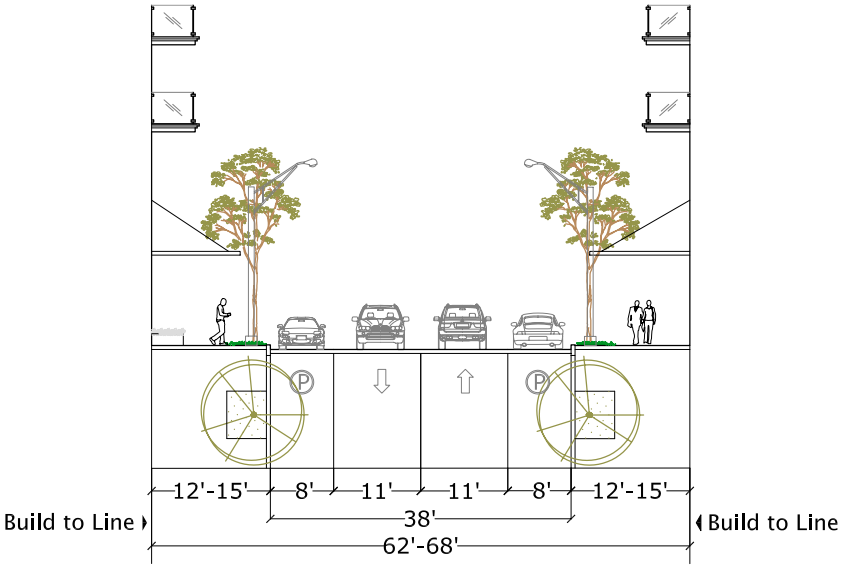


Typical Local Street Section

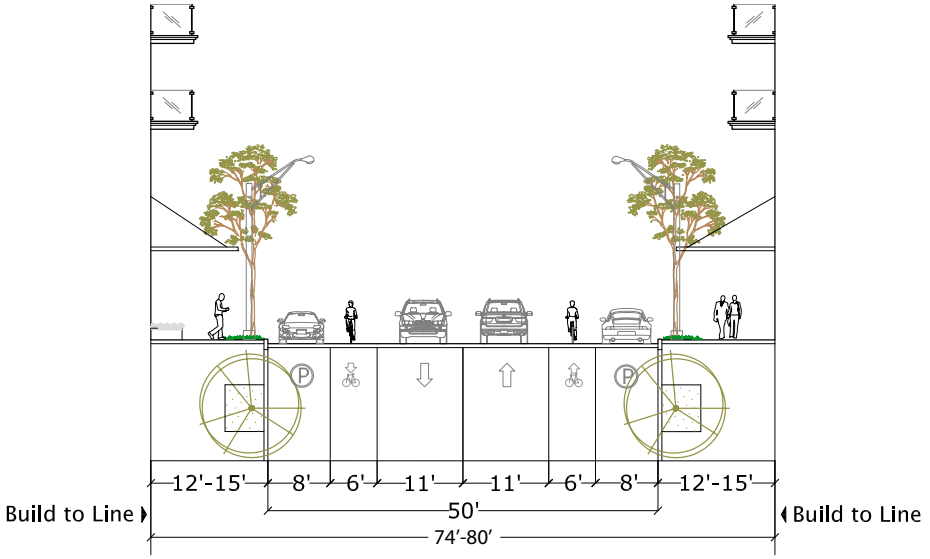
Local Streets provide narrower roadways that balance the needs of pedestrians and vehicles. The typical local street proposed by this Plan provides one driving lane in each direction with a row of parallel parking on each street edge. The parked cars will form a protective barrier from the street which will create a safe and inviting pedestrian environment along the sidewalk. Streets are designed with bicycle and pedestrian movement in mind. Generally, traffic speeds should be slow enough to provide a safe atmosphere for on-street bicycling, but bike lanes may also be provided.

There are two different Right-of-Ways for local streets. Collector 62 : 38 has one lane of traffic in each direction with two rows of parallel parking. Collector 74 : 50 incorporates bicycle lanes with the one lane of traffic in each direction and two rows of parallel parking.

Local: 62 : 38



Local: 74 : 50



APPENDIX D

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

ACC	Austin Community College
ACWP	Austin Clean Water Program
AFD	Austin Fire Department
AISD	Austin Independent School District
AMATP	Austin Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan
ANA	A. Nelessen Associates
AWU	Austin Water Utility
CAMPO	Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Capital Metro	Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority
CIP	Capital Improvements Program
DVISD	Del Valle Independent School District
EAPP	Edwards Aquifer Protection Program
ECT	Envision Central Texas
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
ERC	East Riverside Corridor
FAR	Floor-to-Area Ratio
HGL	Hydraulic Grade Line
IH 35	Interstate Highway 35
LCRA	Lower Colorado River Authority
LUE	Living Unit Equivalent
MoPac	Loop 1
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
NHCD	Neighborhood Housing and Community Development (City of Austin)
NPZD	Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department (City of Austin)
PARD	Parks and Recreation Department (City of Austin)
PDRD	Planning and Development Review Department (City of Austin)
SH 71	State Highway 71 / Ben White Boulevard
TCEQ	Texas Council on Environmental Quality
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
UT	University of Texas
WPDR	Watershed Protection and Development Review Department (City of Austin)